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Śrī Kāśī-Jñāna-pīṭha

(Tradition and History)

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Śrī Kāśī-Jñāna-pīṭha
(Tradition and History)

by

Dr. K.V. Ramesh,
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"Śrī Kāśī Jñānapīṭha: Tradition and History" - Main Editor : K.V. Ramesh, Former Director (Epigraphy) and Joint Director General (Retd.), Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi and Formerly Hon. Director and Adviser, Oriental Research Institute, University of Mysore, Mysore.

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CONTENTS

Preface - i

Foreword - v

Editorial - ix

Introduction - 1

Chapter I :
The beginning of the historical period - 10

Chapter II :
The Kāśī-pīṭha and the Banaras Hindu University - 15

Chapter III :
Kāśī-pīṭha and Mogal Patronage - 20

Chaper IV :
The Vaṁśāvaḷi of the Heads of the Kāśī-pīṭha - 24

Chapter V :
Establishment of Development Fund for Śrī Kāśī Vīraśaiva Vidyādharma - 42

Chapter VI :
The Viśvārādhya Bank and its problems - 61

Chapter VII :
Financial recovery of the *pīṭha* - 91

Chapter VIII :
Kāśī-pīṭha and the Tenancy Act of 1956 -106

Chapter IX :
Dawn of the New Era - 115

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Dedication

Śrī Kāśī Jñāna-Pīṭha has given knowledge, free boarding and lodging to a large number of students hailing from different parts of the country. On behalf of the students of the Jñāna Pīṭha, this Śrī Kāśī Jñāna-Pīṭha : Tradition and Historyā is dedicated with great devotion to all the Gurus of the Pīṭha from Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya onwards.

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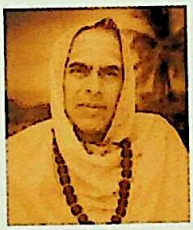
Śrī Jagadguru Pañchapīṭha heads who had studied in Śrī Kāśī Jaṅgamavāḍi Maṭha and Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Gurukula



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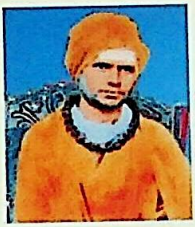
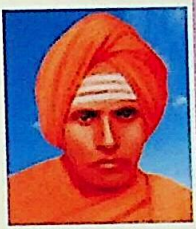
Niraṁjana Mūrtīs and heads of Maṭhs with different traditions who had studied in Śrī Kāśī Jaṁgamavāḍi Maṭha and Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Gurukula





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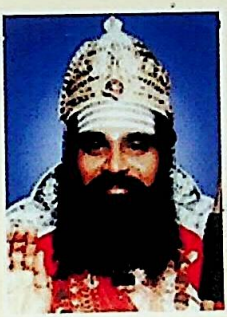
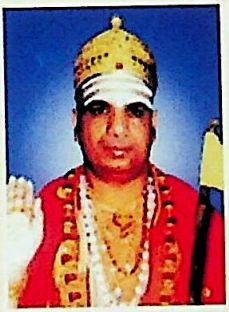
The Heads of Shri Jagadguru Panchapitha



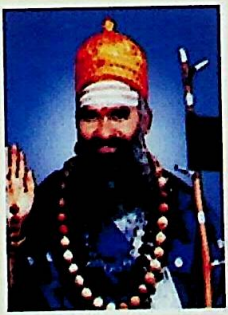
Shri Rambhapuri Jagadguru

Shri Shrishaila Jagadguru



Shri Kashi Jagadguru

Shri Ujjayini Jagadguru



Shri Kedara Jagadgurugalu

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Śrī Śrī Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Dr. Chandraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmī's benediction

We are greatly pleased by this special publication brought out by the 'Vīraśaiva Anusandhāna Samsthāna', Bangalore on the unique history and tradition of Śrī Kāśī Pīṭha. The former Director of Epigraphy and Retd. Joint Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, Dr. K.V. Ramesh has added greater value to this publication by agreeing to be its Main Editor. The Editorial Board consists of scholars of repute viz., Sri Mahadēva Śivāchāryasvāmi of Babalēśvara Bṛihanmaṭha, Sri Śivānanda Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi of Tumkur Hirēmaṭha, Prof. A. S. Hirēmaṭha of Rāṇebennūr, Sri M.P.M. Shanthaveeraiah of Harapanahalli and Sri Mahābalēśvara Bīḷagi, Assistant Editor of the Kannada Daily "Vijaya Karnataka" of Hubli.

This publication entitled "Śrī Kāśī-Jñāna-pīṭha : Tradition and History" will prove as a useful source material for researchers and students who would like to get acquainted with the regligious, educational, literary and cultural activities of Śrī Kāśī-pīṭha.

Dr. K.V. Ramesh has established in his editorial the fact that the history of the Kāśī-pīṭha goes back to the 6th century A.D. after carefully studying all the documents available in the Kāśī-pīṭha from the earliest inscription of the Kāśī Mahārāja Jayanandadēva dated in 574 A.D. and the *Firmans* issued by the Muslim emperors from 1530 A.D. to 1668 A.D. and taking into

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account the recognition accorded in the judgement of the Allahabad High Court on the genuineness of these documents. This editorial of Dr. K.V. Ramesh, which he has independently prepared on the basis of avaiable documents, is of much significance. This English Publication has been aply titled as "Śrī Kāśī-Jñāna-pīṭha: Tradition and History".

We are glad to mention here the fact that Smt. Usha Suresh, Director, Department of Archives, Government. of Karnataka has visited the Kāśī Pīṭha with all her staff and had microfilmed all the related documents available with us. Besides, she has also large heartedly arranged for a grant-in-aid for this publication from the Government. of Karnataka.

The holy city of Kāśī has gained fame from time immemorial as *Jñāna Nagari*. From all over India and the rest of the world scholars have been pouring into Kāśī for studying Sanskrit language and literature and all other scriptures. Thus, the city of Kāśī has been a centre for dissemination of knowledge and it is but fitting that the Kāśī Jñānasiṁhāsana Mahāpīṭha, which is one of the five ancient Vīraśaiva Pīṭhas has, true to its name, offered to countless number of students, without any bias or distinction, free food and accommodation along with comprehensive knowledge. It is no small matter that all the Jagadgurus who had assended the Kāśī-pīṭha had all of them been the students of this Jñānasiṁhāsana Mahāpīṭha.

We are aware of the fact that there are a number of educational institutions devoted to the teaching of primary,

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middle and higher-middle standards in Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh under the guidance of a number of Śivāchāryas and Nirañjanamūrthis. We have come to know of this fact because a large number of students from those institutions come to the Kāśī-Jñāna-pīṭha for their higher education with the Trasnfer Certificates from their respective institutions.

Thus, the Kāśī-Mahāpīṭha has been from time immemorial spreading the knowledge of Sanskrit language and holy scriptures leading to the nurturing of the ancient Vīraśaiva-dharma. Of late, the students in the Kāśī-pīṭha Gurukula are enjoying the benefit of free boarding and lodging. Besides, there are also arrangements for accommodating and free feeding of pilgrims of all faiths who visit Kāśī. In addition to this we have also established student's hostels in Puṇe and Lāthūr. At the same time, ancient Śivāgāmas are critically studied, researched upon and are being published in Indian and foreign languages thus propagating the Vīraśaiva faith. In this manner, the Kāśī Mahāpīṭha has been serving on a large scale the religious, educational, literary and social activities and has thus earned the reputation of respecting all religions.

'The Kāśī-Jñāna-pīṭha : Tradition and History' being published in English includes all the details pertaining to the ancient tradition and history of the Kāśī-pīṭha with relevant documentation. There is no doubt that this publication will be welcomed by interested readers. We are glad that a book of this nature has been written by Dr. K.V. Ramesh, in spite of his

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other pressing pre-occupations. He has very critically examineld and upheld the genuineness of all the documents which have been preserved in the Kāśī-pīṭha. We, therefore, pray that Lord Kāśī Viśvanātha and Goddess Annapūrṇna as well as Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya shower their blessings on him and those who have cooperated with him. We also bless the other editors of the work on the Tradition and History of the Kāśī-pīṭha for their invaluable contributions. Smt. Usha Suresh, Director, Dept. of Archives, Govt. of Karnataka has helped with arranging for grant-in-aid for this publication from the Govt. of Karnataka. We also confer on her the blessings of Viśvārādhya. Finally, we bless the proprietor of Ready Print Desktop Publishers, Shri S.K.Lakshminarayana (Babu), Mysore for bringing out this publication with quality production at short notice.

Ōṁ Śāntiḥ Śāntiḥ Śāntiḥ

May Lord Śiva shower his eternal blessings

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Government of Karnataka

Department of Archives

FOREWORD

The unified State of Karnataka has now completed 52 years of its momentous existence. In order to celebrate this event the State Department of Archives, Govt. of Karnataka, has undertaken a number of schemes with reference to the publication of books on History and this scheme is considered as one of great importance.

The Department of Archives of Karnataka Government had come into existence in 1973. This State is a repository of numerous historical sources. This department was established in order to ensure the preservation of innumerable paper manuscripts, letters of credence and historical records which are found in plenty in the possession of well-known royal families, palaces, religious institutions and renowned individuals to be found all along the length and breadth of Karnataka. This department has so far collected more than 1,00,000 such records and the work of classifying, preserving and publishing them has been undertaken. Thus the department is involved in the protection of the Kannada language.

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It is the duty of any democratic government to see that the importance of such records are made known to the people. Thus the department of archives has been doing the admirable work of bringing to light the contents of such historical records as kaḍatas, palm leaf manuscripts as well as paper manuscripts through the publication of classified descriptive catalogues.

The department of Archives has undertaken the important project of collecting such historical records, getting them examined by the experts and publishing them. As of now, the department has published a number of important works and one such meritorious publication is the present work, "Śrī Kāśī-Jñāna-pīṭha : Tradition and History". The antiquity of the history and tradition of the Kāśī-pīṭha will astonish anyone who tries to learn its history. Even today, the donative inscription recording land grants made to the Kāśī-pīṭha by śrī Jayanaṁdadēva, the ruler of Kāśī as early as in the 6th century A.D. is preserved in the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha. Besides, there is an inscription in Bhaktapura of Nēpāl recording the grant of land by the then ruler of Nēpāl in 635 A.D. to the Branch Maṭha of Kāśī-pīṭha. This inscription can be seen even today in the Bhaktapura Maṭha.

The Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha has also earned the respect of the Muslim emperors of North India. The *Firmans* issued by the Mughal Emperors Humāyūn, Akbar, Jahaṁgīr, Shahajahān, Auraṁgazēb, Dārāshikōh during the period 1530 A.D. to 1668 A.D. are all carefully preserved in the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha.

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The Rulers of Mysore and the kings of Koḍagu have also made donations to the Kāśī-pīṭha. In this work, there is information available on the establishment of the Gurukula of Kāśī-pīṭha as also on the large number of students from all castes and creeds who had passed through that Institution. This comprehensive publication on the history and tradition of the Kāśī-pīṭha has been published under the banner of "Vīraśaiva Anusaṁdhāna Saṁsthāna" of Bengaluru.

The department conveys its sincere thanks to Sri I.M. Viththala Murthy, the Secretary of the Department of Kannaḍa, Culture and Tourism, who has been instrumental in bringing out this publication.

I am also very grateful to all the personnel of the Archives Department who have lent their service in making this programme a success.

Smt. Usha Suresh
Director,
Dept. of Archives,
Government of Karnataka,
Vidhana Soudha, Beṁgaḷūru

1st January 2008

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EDITORIAL

At the very outset, I wish to convey my deep sense of gratitude to the 86th Jagadguru Śrī 1008 Śrī Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Mallikārjuna Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi for entrusting me with this prestigious work of writing the history of the Kāśī-kshētra Jaṁgamavāḍi Jñānasiṁhāsana-pīṭha which is one of the oldest well documented religious institutions of our country. In this connection, I am also grateful to my dear friend Dr. N. Basavārādhya and Dr. C. U. Umādēvi of Bengaluru for being instrumental in selecting me for this job.

Writing the pre-history and history of this great institution has been an eye opener for me both as an epigraphist and as a historian. As I was writing the history of the Kāśī-pīṭha, I realized the great service being rendered by the Paṁchāchāryas in promoting religious, social, cultural and educational fields.

We Indians very often hear the two maxims "*nahi jñānēna sadṛiśaṁ pavitram-iha vidyate*" (there is nothing which is more sacred than knowledge) and "*jñānaṁ vijñāna sahitaṁ*" (learning is always accompanied by specialized knowledge) and nod our heads in appreciation. Just like the waters of the Gaṅgā have been flowing from times immemorial, these two maxims have also been repeated from age to age. The many special characterstics of our land have their own message to convey. This speciality applies to the internal essence, originality, righteouness, quality, justice, penance, the eagerness to attain

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salvation, etc. While, during olden days, there was nothing worth mentioning in other lands, our own mother land had been having from times immemorial splendid civilization which was characterized by valuable culture and social and individual values. All these facts should make us feel proud about our own heritage. The highest ambition in life for all Indians is the attainment of salvation (*mōksha*). For achieving this all our sacred pilgrimage centres are supportive and they nourish, help and serve as ladders for attaining salvation. In particular, the holy pilgrimage centre of Kāśī is known to be a sacred place for those who seek salvation. It is a universal fact that Kāśī is one of the most ancient cities in the world. This place is also known an "*avimukta kshētra*" (inalienable from salvation).

Kāśī is sanctified by the holy river Gaṅgā. On the western bank is the great city of Kāśī and to its east is the vast open field. The city of Kāśī has numerous famous temples as well as bathing ghats. Śrī Kāśī Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha which is famous as Śrī Kāśī-pīṭha is one of the renowned religious-cum-educational institutions located in that holy city. This institution is of great importance both from the points of view of its legendary origins and history. This *pīṭha* is the refuge for attaining salvation at all times for the Jaṁgamas, ascetics, scholars and representatives of our culture.

As has been shown in the sequel, the legendary history of the Kāśī pīṭha goes back to the four yugas viz., *Kṛita, Trētā, Dvāpara and Kali.* We can consider the religious progenitor

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Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya as marking the establishment of the historical beginnings of the Kāśī-pīṭha in Kaliyuga.

Apart from these legendary beginnings, the actual history of the Kāśī-pīṭha goes back to the 6th century A.D. as can be gleaned from the records available in the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha. It is a historical truth that the Kardamēśvara temple and the vast open field on the banks of the Gaṅgā flowing northwards was given as a grant to the Kāśī-pīṭha. It is also a fact that the antiquity of this *pīṭha*, on the basis of the genuineness of the documents preserved therein, is attested by the Allahabad High Court.

In whichever corner of the world anyone may have studied Sanskrit, it is accepted that that person will get educational fulfilment only if he concludes his studies in Kāśī-kshētra. It is noteworthy that both Ādi Śaṁkara and Rāmānujāchārya wrote their commentaries on the *Upanishads* and *Brahmasūtras* during their stay in Kāśī. Moreover, even Muslim scholars have studied Sanskrit and the *Upanishads* in that language while staying in Kāśī. The Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Siṁhāsana which is one of the five *pīṭhas* of the Vīraśaiva faith is not only located in Kāśī but is as ancient as that sacred city. In this *Jñāna Siṁhāsana* various Scriptures, Arts and Sanskrit language are taught by scholarly teachers right from early times. It is a matter of gratification that from the very beginning students enrolling themselves in the Kāśī- pīṭha have enjoyed the facilities of free boarding and lodging.

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This *pīṭha* is in possession of the details about all the 85 Jagadgurus who had adorned the Kāśī Pīṭha as its heads. There are enough reasons to state that all these 85 Jagadgurus had studied in the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha itself.

Anyone who cares to go through the list of the heads of religious *pīṭhas*, *maṭhas* as also famous scholars, will realise that the Kāśī Vidyāpīṭha which had given shelter and education to so many religious heads and scholars is indeed a unique one. No one can gainsay this fact.

Having realised this fact, the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Śivaliṁga Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi implemented his desire of promoting the educational facilities in the *maṭha* to the status of a *Gurukula*. He gave a concrete shape for his plans of sustaining this *Gurukula* in the year 1910 during the religious congregation which met on Mahāśivarātri and gave the instititionalized name of "Śrī Kāśī Vīraśaiva Vidyā Dharmābhivṛidhdhi Fund". The Jagadguru himself gave it a flying start by donating Rs.10,005/-. His plan was to utilize the above fund for establishing *Gurukulas* in the *maṭhas* in Kāśī, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Later, in the year 1918, in the congregation attended by the Jagadguru Paṁchāchāryas "Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Gurukula" was formally inaugurated. It has since been carrying out its educational activities in an exemplary manner. Those who read this editorial will certainly realise the great service rendered by the Kāśī Mahāpīṭha before

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and after the establishment of the *Gurukula* in spreading the knowledge of Vīraśaiva-dharma as well as other subjects including the literary and art disciplines. In confirming the traditional reputation of Kāśī as *Vidyānagari*, the Kāśī-pīṭha has its own share of contribution.

I salute with all the humility at my command the present head of the Kāśī-pīṭha Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi for entrusting me with the responsibility of being the Main Editor of this work "Śrī Kāśī-jñāna-pīṭha : Tradition and History". I also convey my thanks to the members of the Editorial Board viz., Dr. Mahādēva Śivachāryaswamy Babalēśvara, Dr. Śivānanda Śivāchāryaswamy of Tumkur, Prof. A.C. Hiremaṭha of Ranebennur, Sri M.P.M. Śānthavīraiah of Harapanahalli and Sri Mahabalēśvara Bīḷagi, Navanagara of Hubli for their commitment in the preparation of this work.

I will be failing in my duty if I dont acknowledge the great service rendered by Dr. C.U. Umādēvi at all stages of the preparation of this work. I wish to acknowledge the help I have taken from the Kannada version entitled "Śrī Kāśī Pīṭha : paraṁpare mattu itihāsa" which was provided to me by Dr. C.U. Umādēvi, the benefit of whose scholarship I have received in plenty in the preparation of this work. I am also grateful to Jagadguru Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi of Kāśī-pīṭha for sending me a couple of e-mails which were of great help in the completion of this work.

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In the preparation of this work, I cannot forget the help that I have received from Sri G.S. Ravishankar, who is a computer expert and who has devoted his full time and devotion in getting this work readied on time. I also wish to express my thankfulness to Dr. N.K. Ramaseshan, who had been partly associated with the preparation of this work. Lastly, I wish to thank Sri S.K. Lakshminarayana, Proprietor, Ready Print Desktop Publisher in printing this work in a record time maintaining at the same time high quality of production.

22nd December 2008 K.V. Ramesh

Mysore.

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Śrī Śrī Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Dr. Chamdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmī's benediction

We are greatly pleased by this special publication brought out by the Vīraśaiva Anusamdhāna Samsthāna, Bangalore on the unique history and tradition of Śrī Kāśī Pīṭha. The former Director of Epigraphy and Retd. Joint Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, Dr. K.V. Ramesh has added greater value to this publication by agreeing to be its Main Editor. The Editorial Board consists of scholars of repute viz., Sr Mahadēva Śivāchāryasvāmi of Babalēśvara Bṛihanmaṭha, Sre Śivānamda Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi of Tumkur Hirēmaṭha, Prof. A. S. Hirēmaṭha of Rāṇebennūr, Sri M.P.M. Shanthaveeraiah of Harapanahalli and Sri Mahābalēśvara Bīḷagi, Assistant Editor of the Kannada Daily "Vijaya Karnaṭaka" of Hubli.

This publication entitle "Śrī Kāśī Pīṭha: Tradition and History" will prove as a useful source material for researchers and students who would like to get acquainted with the regligious, educational, literary and cultural activities of Śrī Kāśī Pīṭha.

Dr. K.V. Ramesh has established in his editorial the fact that the history of the Kāśī Pīṭha goes back to the 6th century A.D. after carefully studying all the documents available in the Kāśī Pīṭha from the earliest inscription of the Kāśī Mahārāja Jayanamdadēva dated in 574 A.D. and the Firmans issued by the Muslim emperors from 1530 A.D. to 1668 A.D. and taking into accounts the recognition accorded by the judgement of the

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Allahābād High Court on the genuineness of the documents. This editorial of Dr. K.V. Ramesh, which he has independently prepared on the basis of avaiable documents is of much significance. This English Publication has been aply titled as "Śrī Kāśī Pīṭha: Tradition and History".

We are glad to mention here the fact that Smt. Usha Suresh, Director, Department of Archieves, Government. of Karnataka has visited the Kāśī Pīṭha with all her staff and had microfilmed all the related documents available with us. Besides, she has also large heartedly arranged for a grant for this publication from the Government. of Karnataka.

The holy city of Kāśī has gained fame from time immemorial as *Jñāna Nagari*. From all over India and the rest of the world scholars have been pouring into Kāśī for studying Sanskrit language and literature and all other scriptures. Thus, the city of Kāśī has been a centre for dissemination of knowledge and it is but fitting that the Kāśī Jñānasiṁhāsana Mahāpīṭha, which is one of the five ancient Vīraśaiva Pīṭhas has, true to its name, offered to countless number of students, without any bias or distinction free food and accommodation along with comprehensive knowledge. It is no small matter that all the Jagadgurus who had assended the Kāśī Pīṭha had all of them been the students of this Jñānasiṁhāsana Mahāpīṭha.

We are aware of the fact that there are a number of educational institutions devoted to the teaching of primary, middle and higher-middle classes in Karnataka, Maharashtra and

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Andhra Pradesh under the guidance of a number of Śivāchāryas and Nirañjana Murthy. We have come to know of this fact because a large number of students from those institutions come to the Kāśī-Jñāna Pīṭha for their higher education with the Trasnfer Certificates from their respective institutions.

Thus, the Kāśī Mahā Pīṭha has been from time immemorial spreading the knowledge of Sanskrit language and holy scriptures leading to the nurturing of the ancient Vīraśaiva- dharma. Of late, the students in the Kāśī Pīṭha Gurukula are enjoying the benefit of free boarding and lodging. Besides, there are also arrangements for accommodating and free feeding of pilgrims of all faiths who visit Kāśī. In addition to this we have also established studentās hostels in Puṇe and Lāthur. At the same time, ancient Śivāgāmas are critically studied, researched upon and are being published in Indian and foreign languages thus propagating the Vīraśaiva faith. In this manner, the Kāśī Mahāpīṭha has been serving on a large scale the religious, educational, literary and social activities and has thus earned the reputation of respecting all religions.

'The Kāśī Jñāna Pīṭha - Tradition and History' being published in English includes all the details pertaining to the ancient tradition and history of the Kāśī Pīṭha with relevant documentation. There is no doubt that this publication will be welcomed by interested readers. We are glad that a book of this nature has been written by Dr. K.V. Ramesh, in spite of his

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other pressing pre-occupations. He has very critically examineld and upheld the genuineness of all the documents which have been preserved in the Kāśī Pīṭha. We therefore, pray that Lord Kāśī Viśvanātha and the Goddess Annapūrṇna as well as Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya shower their blessings on him and those who have cooperated with him. We also bless the other editors of the work on the Tradition and History of the Kāśī Pīṭha for their invaluable contributions. Smt. Usha Suresh, Director, Dept. of Archives. Govt. of Karnataka has helped with arranging for grant-in-aid for this publication from the Govt. of Karnataka. We also confer on her the blessings of Viśvārādhya. Finally, we bless the proprietor of M/s Ready Print, Mysore for bringing out this publication with quality production at short notice.

Ōṁ Śāntiḥ Śāntiḥ Śāntiḥ

May Lord Śiva shower his eternal blessing

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Government of Karnata

Department of Archieves

FOREWORD

The Unified State of Karnataka has now completed 52 years of its momentous existance. In order to celebrate this event the State Department of Archieves has undertaken a number of schemes with reference to the publication of books on History and this scheme is considered as one of great importance.

The Department of Archieves of Karnataka Government had come into existance in 1973. This State is a repository of numerous historical sources. This department was established in order to ensure the preservation of innumerable Paper manuscripts, letters of credence and historical records which are found in plenty in the possession of well-known royal families, palaces, religious institutions and renowned individuals to be found all along the length and breadth of Karnataka. This department has so far collected more than 100,000 such records and the work of classifying, preserving and publishing them has been undertaken. Thus the department is involved in the protection of the Kannada language.

It is the duty of the democratic government to see that such records are made to reach the people. Thus the department

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of archieves has been doing the admirable work of bringing to light the contents of such historical records as the kaḍatas, palm leaf manuscripts as well as paper manuscripts through the publication of classified descriptive catalogues.

The department of Archieves of the Govt. of Karnataka has undertaken the important project of collecting such historical records, getting them examined by the experts and publishing them. As of now, the department has published a number of important works and one such meritorious publication is the present work, "Śrī Kāśī Pīṭha Jñānagaṁgā - Tradition and History". The antiquity of the history and tradition of the Kāśī Pīṭha will astonish any one who tries to learn its history. Even today, the donative inscription recording land grants made to the Kāśī Pīṭha by śrī Jayanaṁdadēva, the ruler of Kāśī as early as in the 6th century A.D. is preserved in the Jaṁgamavāḍi maṭha. Besides, there is an inscription in Bhaktapura of Nēpāḷ recording the grant of land by the then ruler of Nēpāḷ in 635 A.D. to the Branch Maṭha of Kāśī Pīṭha. This inscription can be seen even today in the Bhaktapura Maṭha.

The Jaṁgamavāḍi Maṭha has also earned the respect of the Muslim emperors of North India. The Firmans issued by the Mughal Emperors, Humāyūn, Akbar, Jahaṁgīr, Shahajahān, Auraṁgazēb, Dārāśikō during the period 1530 A.D. to 1668 A.D. are all carefully preserved in the Jaṁgamavāḍi Maṭha.

The Rulers of Mysore and the kings of Koḍagu have also made donations to the Kāśī Pīṭha. In this work, there is

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information available on the establishment of the Gurukula of Kāśī Pīṭha as also on the large number of students from all castes and creeds who had passed through that institution. This comprehensive publication on the History and Tradition of the Kāśī Pīṭha has been published under the banner of "Vīraśaiva Anusaṁdhāna Saṁsthāna" of Beṅgaḷūru.

The department conveys its sincere thanks to Śrī LM. Viṭhṭhala Murthy, the Secretary of the Department of Kannaḍa, Culture and Tourism, who has been instrumental in bringing out this publication.

I am also very grateful to all the personnel of the Archieves Department who have lent their service in making this programme a success.

Smt. Usha Suresh
Director
Dept. of Archieves,
Governement of Karntaka,
Vidhana Soudha, Beṅgaḷūru

1st January 2008

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EDITORIAL

At the very outset, I wish to convey my deep sense of gratitude to the 86th Jagadguru Śrī 1008 Śrī Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Mallikārjuna Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi for entrusting me with this prestigious work of writing the history of the Kāśī-kshētra Jaṁgamavāḍi Jñānasiṁhāsana- pīṭha which is one of the oldest well documented religious institutions of our country. In this connection, I am also grateful to my dear friend Dr. N. Basavārādhya and Dr. C. U. Umādēvi of Bangalore for being instrumental in selecting me for this job.

Writing the pre-history and history of this great institution has been an eye opener for me both as an epigraphist and as a historian. As I was writing the history of Kāśī-pīṭha, I realized the great service being rendered by the Paṁchāchāryas in promoting religious, social, cultural and educational values.

We Indians very often hear the two maxims "nahi Jñānēna sadruśaṁ pavitram-iha vidyate" (there is nothing which is more sacred than knowledge), "Jñānaṁ vijñāna sahitaṁ" (knowledge is always accompanied by special features) and nod our heads in appreciation. Just like the waters of the Gaṁges have been flowing from times immemorial, these two maxims have also been repeated from age to age. The many special characterstics of our land have their own message to convey. This speciality applies to the internal essence, originality, righteouness, quality, justice, penance, the eagerness to attain

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salvation, etc. While, during olden days, there was nothing worth mentioning in other lands, our own mother land had been having from times immemorial splendid civilization which was characterized by valuable culture and social and individual values. All these facts should make us feel proud about our own heritage. The highest ambition of life for all Indians is the achievement of salvation (*mōksha*). For achieving this all our sacred pilgrimage centres are supportive and they nourish, help and serve as ladders for attaining salvation. In particular the wholy pilgrimage centre of Kāśī is known to be a sacred place for those who seek salvation. It is a universal fact that Kāśī is one of the most ancient cities in the world. This place is also known an "avimukta kshētra" (inalienable from salvation).

Kāśī is sanctified by the holy river Gaṅges. On the western bank is the great city of Kāśī and to its east is the vast open field. The city of Kāśī has numerous famous temples as well as bathing ghats. śrī Kāśī Jaṁgamavāḍi Maṭha which is famous as śrī Kāśī Pīṭha is one of the renowned religious-cum-educational institutions located in that holy city. This institution is of great importance both from the points of view of its legendary origins and history. This *Pīṭha* is the refuge for attaining salvation at all times for the Jaṁgamas, ascetics, scholars and representatives of our culture.

As has been shown in the sequel, the legendary history of the Kāśī Pīṭha goes back to the four yugas viz., *Kṛita, Trēta, Dwāpara and Kali.* We can consider the religious career of

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Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya as the establisher of the historical beginnings of the Kāśī Pīṭha in Kaliyuga.

Apart from these legendary beginnings, the actual history of the Kāśī Pīṭha goes back to the 6th century A.D. as can be gleaned from the records available in the Jaṁgavāḍi Maṭha. It is a historical truth that the Kardamēśvara temple and the vast open field on the banks of the Gaṅges flowing northwards was given as a grant to the Kāśī Pīṭha. It is also a fact that the antiquity of this Pīṭha is attested by the Allahabad High Court.

In whichever corner of the world any one who studies Sanskrit, it is accepted that the person will get educational fulfilment only if he concludes his studies in Kāśī Kshētra. It is noteworthy that both Ādi Śaṁkara and Rāmānujāchārya wrote their commentaries on the *Upanishads* and *Brahmasūtras* during their stay in Kāśī. More over, even Muslim Scholars have studied Sanskrit and the *Upanishads* in that language while staying in Kāśī. The Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Siṁhāsana which is one of the five Pīṭhas of the Vīraśaiva faith is not only located in Kāśī but is as ancient as that sacred city. In this *Jñāna Siṁhāsana* various Scriptures, Arts and Sanskrit language are taught by scholarly teachers right from early times. It is a matter of gratification that from the very beginning students enrolling themselves in the Kāśī Pīṭha have enjoyed the facilities of free boarding and lodging.

This *Pīṭha* is in possession of the details about all the 85 Jagadgurus who had adorned the Kāśī Pīṭha as its heads.

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There are enough reasons to state that all these 85 Jagadgurus had studied in the Jaṁgamavāḍi Maṭha itself.

Any one who cares to go through the list of the heads of religious *Pīṭhas*, *Maṭhas* as also famous scholars, will realise that the Kāśī Vidyāpīṭha which had given shelter and education to so many persons was indeed a unique one. No one can gainsay this fact.

Having realisleld this fact, the 82nd head of the Kāśī Pīṭha Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Śivaliṁga Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi implemented his desire of promoting the educational facilities in the Maṭha to the status of a *Gurukula*. He gave a concrete shape to this *Gurukula* in the year 1910 during the religious congregation which met on Mahāśivarātri and gave the *Gurukula* the name of "Śrī Kāśī Vīraśaiva Vidyā Dharmābhivṛidhdhi Fund" and gave it a flying start by donating Rs.10,005/-. His plan was to utilize the above fund for establishing *Gurukulas* in the *Maṭhas* in Kāśī, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Later, in the year 1918, in the congregation attended by the Jagadguru Paṁchāchāryas "Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Gurukula" was formally inaugurated. It has since been carrying out its educational activities in an exemplary manner. Those who read this editorial will certainly realise the great service rendered by the Kāśī Mahāpīṭha before and after the establishment of the *Gurukula* in spreading the knowledge of Vīraśaiva Dharma as well as other subjects including the literary and art displines. In confirming the

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traditional reputation of Kāśī as Vidyānagara, the Kāśī Pīṭha has its own share of contribution.

I salute with all the humility at my command the present head of the Kāśī Pīṭha Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi for entrusting the responsibility of being the Main Editor of this work "Śrī Kāśī Pīṭha : Tradition and History". I also convey my thanks to the Members of the Editorial Board viz., Dr. Mahādēva Śivachāryaswamy Babalēśvara, Dr. Śivānanda Śivāchāryaswamy of Tumkur, Prof. A.C. Hiremaṭha of Ranebennur, Sri M.P.M. Śānthavīraiah of Harapanahalli and Sri Mahabalēśvara Bīḷagi, Navanagara of Hubli for their commitment in the preparation of this work.

I will be failing in my duty, if I dont acknowledge the great service rendered by Dr. C.U. Umādēvi at all stages of the preparation of this work. I wish to acknowledge the help I have taken from the Kannada version entitled "Śrī Kāśī Pīṭha : Paraṁpare mattu Itihāsa" which was provided to me by Dr. C.U. Umādēvi, the benefit of whose scholarship I have received in plenty in the preparation of this work. I am also grateful to Jagadguru Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi of Kāśī Pīṭha for sending me a couple of e-mails which were of great help in the completion of this work.

In the preparation of this work, I cannot forget the help that I have received from Sri G.S. Ravishankar, who is a computer expert and who has devoted his full time and devotion

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in getting this work ready on time. I also wish to express my thankfulness to Dr. N.K. Ramasheshan, who had been partly association with the preparation of this work. Lastly, I wish to thank Sri S.K. Lakshminarayana, Proprietor, Ready Prints in printing this work in a record time maintaining at the same time high production.
quality.

12th December 2008 Dr. K.V. Ramesh

Mysore.

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INTRODUCTION

Gaṅgātaraṁga-ramaṇīya jaṭākalāpaṁ
Gaurī-nirantara-vibhūshita-vāmabhāgaṁ ।
Nārāyaṇa-priyam-Anaṅga-mad-āpahāraṁ
Vārāṇasīpurapatim bhaja Viśvanātham ॥
(*Viśvanāthāshṭaka* of Ādi Śaṅkara)

"Sing the praise of the god Viśvanātha, lord of the city of Vārāṇasī, who sports on his matted hair the beautiful wavy Gaṅgā, and the left side of whose body is permanently ornamented by Pārvatī and who is a favourite of lord Nārāyaṇa and who had suppressed the arrogance of the god of love".

When an ardent devotee worships lord Śiva, his mind is naturally drawn towards the ancient and holiest pilgrimage centre of India, viz., Kāśī. By popular religious belief as well as through known history, the city of Kāśī happens to be one of the most ancient holy pilgrimage centres in India and is widely believed to be the most ideal place for attaining salvation. The legendary Bhagīratha persuaded, through penance, the heavenly river Gaṅgā to descend to the earth and to flow from the north towards the south and then once again flow towards the north. On the western banks of the river Gaṅgā lies spread-eagled the ancient city of Kāśī and on

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its eastern side is a very vast open field. According to the *Vāstu-śāstra*, this feature is considered to be of great significance. On the western side are the lofty palaces and other mansions constructed by the rulers of Kāśī and in the middle of the vast open field flows the holy Gaṅgā. Wherever such an excellent *vāstu* feature exists, it is believed that the place is ideal for penance and for earning lasting mental peace. Kāśī is thus one of the unique holy centres in India.

On the banks of the Gaṅgā flowing northwards, any one who takes a bath in the *Brāhmī-muhūrta* and performs the worship of the Liṅga or performs *Sandhyāvandana* gets the benefit of the absorption of the graceful first rays of the Sun. Since, even *Kailāsa*, the famed abode of Lord Śiva, does not possess this *vāstu* advantage, it is believed that Lord Viśvēśvara migrated from Kailāsa and settled down in Kāśī. That is why, this place has come to be known as "*avimukta-kshētra*". It may be noted that along with Kāśī, six other cities in India are also known as places where devotees can attain salvation. The verse referring to this fact runs as follows:

Ayōdhyā Mathurā Māyā Kāśī Kāṁchī Avaṁtikā ।
Purī Dvārāvatī ch-aiva sapt-aite mōksadāyikāḥ ॥

(Kāśī-khaṁḍa 23-7)

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The place name Kāśī is explained as "*kāśyatē, prakāśyate iti Kāśī*". It means that this place is specially resplendent. It is popularly believed that whoever utters the word 'Kāśī' twice without even going to that place and remaining in his own village will be rid of all his sins.

The hoary antiquity of the city of Kāśī is well attested by the innumerable temples and religious monuments scattered all over the city. We are here concerned with one such ancient religious establishment, viz., the Kāśī-maṭha which is popularly known otherwise as śrī Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha.

There are in Kāśī about 300 *maṭhas* and as many as 1550 temples of different types, customs and traditions. Among these, the Kāśī-pīṭha or Kāśī-maṭha, popularly
known as Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha has its own unique history. The traditional history of the maṭha is to the effect that it has been in existence through all the four Yugas, viz., the Kṛita, Trētā, Dvāpara and Kaliyuga. Tradition, as maintained in the *maṭha*, holds that in all the four Yugas there were incarnations of the preachers of this Jaṅgamavāḍi tradition. This tradition is incorporated in the *Śaivāgamas* which expound that the oriental Vīraśaiva religion had been established in every Yuga by ascetics

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known as śrī Jagadguru Pañchāchārya. Being one of the five Śaiva religious seats, the Jaṅgamavāḍi - maṭha, founded by śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya as a *Jñāna-Siṁhāsana*, enjoys to its credit a very hoary heritage. Beginning from the first or the Kṛitayuga itself, till the beginning of the present Kaliyuga, in all these four ages the incarnations of the Guru accomplished the propagation of Vīraśaivism. This fact has been mentioned by an eminent writer, śri Vaidyanātha Saraswati in a Hindi daily "*Swatantra Bhārat*" dated 26. 11. 1986. The gist of this special article is as follows : "Amongst all *maṭhas* in Kāśī śrī Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha of Vīraśaiva religion is the earliest, going back in historical times to the 6th century A.D. Other religious *maṭhas* that function in Kāśī are said to have been established between the period 1801 A.D. to the middle part of 1968 A.D." Of the Jaṅgamavāḍi Gurus who are said to have propagated Vīraśaivism in the four Yugas, in the Kṛitayuga, it was Pañchākshara Śivāchārya; in the Trētāyuga, it was Pañchavaktra Śivāchārya; in the Dvāparayuga, it was Viśvakarṇa Śivāchārya and in the Kaliyuga, it was Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya. All these Gurus were revered as Jagadgurus.

In the case of the first Guru of this tradition in Kaliyuga, viz, Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya, Lord Śiva himself

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tells Pārvatī about his incarnation. This occurs in a verse in *Svāyaṁbhu Āgama* as:

Kāśyāṁ Viśvēśa Liṅgāch-cha Viśvārādhyasya saṁbhavaḥ।
sthānaṁ śrī Kāśikā-kshētrē śṛiṇu Pārvati sādaram ॥

Oh ! Pārvatī ! Be pleased do hear from me that Viśvārādhya was born from the Viśvēśa Liṅga at Kāśi in Kāśikā-kshētra.

In the *Suprabōdh-āgama*, this saint is eulogized as follows:

Skanda-gōtrādi-nāthaś-cha mahāsiṁhāsan-āgraṇīḥ ।
Viśvārādhya iti khyāto Jagadgurutamaś-cha saḥ ॥

The master of this Skanda and other gotras and the first occupant of the great holy seat and the best among the Jagadgurus was famous as Viśvārādhya.

As per the statements of the *Āgamas*, on the holy occasion of Mahāśivarātri the illustrious Jagadguru Viśvārādhya obtained his mortal physique from the Viśvēśvara Liṅga which is famous as Jyōtirliṅga; and, from the same *Āgama* sources, we know that all the four proponents of ancient Vīraśaivism took their worldly form from the Mukhaliṅga of Kāśī :

ete yuga-chatushke tu Pañchārādhyā yathā vidhi ।
mama Liṅga-mukh-ōdbhūtā lōka viśruta-kīrtayaḥ ॥
(*Svāyaṁbhu Āgama*)

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From these *Āgamic* sources, we may conclude that during the four yugas, the Jagadgurus lead by Viśvārādhya-bhagavatpāda incarnated themselves in all the four yugas bearing different names and established the Vīraśaiva faith, through their preachings.

Jagadguru Viśvakarṇa Śivāchārya, who adorned the *Jñāna-Siṁhāsa* in Dvāpara-yuga, taught the principles of Vīraśaivism to the great Ṛishi Dūrvāsa through the medium called *Paṁchavarṇa-mahāsūtra.* Therefore, this *sūtra* of this ancient Kāśī-pīṭha is famous to this day as *Paṁchavarṇa sūtra.* On this *sūtra*, Siddhanañjēśvara Śivāchārya of the Paṁchavaṇṇige-maṭha had written a *Bhāshya.* Both the *sūtra* as well as the *bhāshya* have been published by the Śaiva-bhārati Śōdha Pratishṭhāna of the Kāśī Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha. The holy place where, in those ancient days, Jagadguru Viśvakarṇa Bhagavatpāda taught the *Paṁchavarṇa-sūtra* to Dūrvāsa-muni has been hailed as Jñānapīṭha even to this day. This Jñānapīṭha has flourished to this day in what is presently famous as Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha in the Jaṅgamavāṭikā in Harikēśa-nandanavana of Kēdāra-khaṁḍa in Kāśī-kshetra. This belief of the Paṁcha-pīṭhas that they have pre-historic beginnings needs to be dealt with in a historical perspective. It is well known that in all major religions of India, though one person may be known as the chief propounder of its philosophy, its actual history goes back in terms

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of time much beyond. For instance, though Mahāvīra is popularly hailed as the founder of Jainism, the Jains themselves claim that there were 23 Tīrthaṅkaras before him and that the first one really belonged to pre-historic times. In fact, the 23rd Tīrthaṅkara Nēminātha himself is stated in their *purāṇas* to have been a contemporary of Lord Kṛishṇa of Mahābhārata times. This means that the times of Āditīrthaṅkara, Ajitatīrthaṅkara and others would naturally go far beyond into the pre-historic times. Even in the case of the Buddha, though he founded the religion through his own power, ability, austerities, thinking, philosophy and his personality, he himself describes his newly found faith as *sanātana-dharma* and nowhere claims that he is the first proponent of that faith. From the *Jātaka* stories of Buddhism, we can easily infer that the Buddha's faith had originated much earlier and had grown through the centuries beginning from the times much earlier than that of the Buddha.

The history of *Vīraśaivism* also has gone through a similar time frame. The *Paṁchāchārya-paṁchamōtpatti-prakaraṇa* of *Suprabōdh-āgama* has the following history to narrate. From the five faces of Śiva, his own image of Nandi, Bhṛiṅgi, Vīra, Vṛishabha and Skanda – these five divine aspects incarnated themselves as Gaṇēśvaras and established five gōtras.

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The historically famous Āchāryas of the subsequent centuries related to the above five *gōtras* are respectively, Rēṇuka, Dāruka, Paṁḍita, Ēkōrāma and Viśvārādhya. We must recognize that these five names represent each a different Vīraśaiva tradition. The Viśvārādhya-paraṁparā of Kāśī is a very ancient one with its history going back to the earliest years of the historical period. It is really well known that this part of the history of the Vīraśaiva Pīṭha of the Kāśī Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha has been carefully preserved from the days of the early Christian era to our own days. In the case of the prehistory of the Kāśī-pīṭha, their *Āgamas* trace back its history to the first Jagadguru Viśvārādhya, who incarnated himself from the Īśāna-mukha of Śiva in the *Kṛitayuga*. He was so great that his successors, who incarnated themselves in the other three Yugas, also bear the name of Viśvārādhya. Among them, Jagadguru Viśvakaṇa Śivāchārya was active in the *Dvāparayuga* and preached the Vīraśaiva doctrine to none other than the great Maharshi Dūrvāsa through *Paṁchavarṇa-mahāsūtra*. This *sūtra* has come to be identified as the very basic philosophy of the Kāśī-pīṭha. The Jagadguru who followed Viśvārādhya-Bhagavatpāda was Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi whose date goes back to as early as 2040 B. C. This is gathered from the *Paṭṭavallari* or *vaṁśāvaḷi* of the Jagadgurus of

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Kāśī-pīṭha. Through his ascetic skills, he served as Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha for 311 years and was entombed alive (attained *sajīva-samādhi*). It is this holy tomb which is being worshipped to this day as the Creator's Tomb (*Kartṛi-samādhi*).

Since Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi was an ascetic of great achievements, whoever succeeded him in the subsequent years as Heads of that Kāśī-pīṭha adopted his name as their *paṭṭanāma*. Thus his 77 successors have all of them the same name of Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya. This fact has been clearly recorded in the records of the Kāśī-pīṭha.

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CHAPTER I

The beginning of the historical period

We have seen above the strong tradition which claims prehistoric beginnings for the Vīraśaiva philosophy of the Kāśī-pīṭha. Such legendary narratives of religious prehistory do not detract from the importance and achievements of great institutions like the Kāśī Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha. Besides retaining the above legendary narratives the Kāśī Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha also possesses very important historical documents which prove that the Kāśī-pīṭha had become an important religious institution as early as in the 6th century A.D. The most ancient historical document preserved in the Kāśī-pīṭha is an edict issued by the Ruler of Kāśī Jayanandadēva to the 51st pontiff Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya-mahāsvāmi (popularly known as Mallikārjuna Jaṅgama). This ascetic had occupied the Kāśī-pīṭha for as long as 121 years from 553 A.D. to 674 A.D. It was during his period that śrī Jayanandadēva, who was ruling over Kāśī as a subordinate of the Ruler of Kanauj, made a grant of land to the Kāśī-pīṭha. The grant was made in Vikrama saṁvat 631 (equal to 574 A.D.) on Prabōdhini Ēkādaśi i.e., Kārttika śu. 11 to Śrī Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya-

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mahāsvāmi through a written edict. The worn out text of this edict which goes back to 1433 years is safely preserved to this day in the Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha. Even a great historian of the stature of A. S. Altekar has certified the genuiness of Jayanandadēva's gift-deed.

But, surprisingly enough, the document of Jayanandadēva was engraved on a perishable material, the exact nature of which is not known for certain. The true copy of the document sent to me by the revered head of the Kāśī-pīṭha has all the regular features of a land grant such as the inclusion of the imprecatory portions in the concluding part of the edict like "*bahubhir vasudhā dattā rājabhiḥ Sagarādibhiḥ / shashṭi -varsha-sahasrāṇi svargē mōdati bhūmidaḥ*". Therefore, there is no doubt that the earliest document of Jayanandadēva preserved in the Kāśī-pīṭha is a historically genuine record of the 6th century A.D. whose genuineness has been confirmed by the famous epigraphist-historian A. S. Altekar who had personally examined all the gift-deeds preserved in the Kāśī-pīṭha.

From the above document, we learn that Rājādhirāja Mahārāja Jayanandadēva, the ruler of Kāśī passed an order in favour of Gōsāyi Mallikārjuna Jaṅgama of śrī Viśvārādhya Siṁhāsana donating the temple of Kardamēśvara Mahādēva and the vast plain land to the east of the river Gaṅgā which measured 800 *paraga*

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from east to west and 800 *paraga* from north to south. This vast plain land was given for grazing the cattle belonging to the Kāśī-pīṭha. According to the document, all the crops grown in the said area are to be enjoyed by those who follow the tradition of śrī Mallikārjuna Jaṅgama. The usual curses on those who flout the provisions of this grant as found engraved in ancient Indian donative records are also found included in this document. It is true that the historical antiquity of the Kāśī-pīṭha soundly rests on the bedrock of Jayanandadēva's gift-deed.

In course of time even this 6th century record written on perishable material began to show signs of damage. In order to ensure the continued presence of the document in the Kāśī-pīṭha, the descendant of Kāśī ruler who had made the original donation viz., Prabhu Nārāyaṇa Siṁha, who was then ruling over Kāśī got this document engraved on a copper plate in Vikrama saṁvat 1982 (equal to 1925 A.D.) and affixed his signature confirming that this 20th century true copy of the document was as valid as the original 6th century document. It is worth devoting some thought on the measurement and boundaries of the land donated by Jayanandadēva. The Kardamēśvara Mahādēva temple which had also been donated by Jayanandadēva to the then Head of the Kāśīpīṭha is a very significant Śiva temple met with

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during the *paṁchakrōśīyātrā*. When one proceeds from this Śiva temple in the eastern direction, he will reach the banks of the Gaṅgā. The land between the Kardamēśvara Mahādēva temple and the Gaṁgā river was all through a plain land. This vast plain land to the east of the Kardamēśvara Mahādēva temple measured as stated above 800 *paragas* east to west and 800 *paragas* north to south. The term '*paraga*' which is used here as a measurement refers to a man standing at a place on one foot and keeping his other foot in the fashion of walking. The space between these two feet is called *paraga*. This was an ancient method of measuring land units. The present method of measuring land units is indeed based on this ancient method. If we measure the vast land given by Jayanandadēva as per the definition of *paraga* what would be the measurement of the actual area donated by Jayanandadēva ? If we take the ancient word *pāda* to mean one foot and if we consider the distance between the one foot and the other in walking posture, the land granted by Jayanandadēva would be 4000 ft. from east to west and 4000 ft. north to south. In terms of sq. ft. this would amount to 1. 60 lakhs sq. feet. When this is converted into acres, it would be 365 acres. In that place, in course of time, the Jaṅgama township grew up and the work of sowing, growing and reaping was continued

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from that time onwards. That Jaṁgama town came to be called locally as Jaṁgamapura. In that town tombs of earlier heads of the Kāśī-pīṭha were also successively built as per prescribed ceremonial rites..

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CHAPTER II

The Kāśī-pīṭha and the Banaras Hindu University

In the year 1916, the great Indian patriot Paṁḍit Madana Mohana Māḷaviya decided to establish a Hindu University in Banaras (Kāśī). To achieve this laudable purpose, he collected, by way of gifts, land and wealth from many landlords and kings and emperors. It is due to his effort that the world famous Kāśī Hindu Mahāvidyālaya (Banaras Hindu University) was founded and flourishes to this day. The elderly and highly respected Paṁḍit Madana Mohana Māḷaviya was gifted a total of 1215. 53 acres of land by several land owners as listed below ;

Nagwa Durbar	37. 84 acres
Bhagawānpur Durbar	14. 46 acres
Bhagawānpura	78. 42 acres
Nariyā	295. 31 acres
Dhanañjayapur	122. 93 acres
Khijrāhi	52. 00 acres
Jaṅgamapura	75. 68 acres
Susvāhi	133. 08 acres
Śrī Gōvardhanpur	214. 53 acres
Chhittāpur	191. 28 acres
Total	1215. 53 acres

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These details pertaining to the donation of lands for the University are recorded in 'History of the Banaras Hindu University. The fact that the lands were obtained from (1) Mahārāja Bahaddūr of Banaras (2) Rājā Munshi Madholal, (3) Bābutēj Nārāyaṇasiṁha and (4) The Mahant of Jaṅgamavāḍi maṭha is separately recorded in the same book elsewhere also From the above facts what comes to light is that, out of the land granted by the Ruler of Kāśī to Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha in the 6th century A.D. amounting to 365 acres, as per the desire of Paṁḍit Madana Mohana Māḷaviya in 1916, the then Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mahanta Śivaliṅga Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi had donated 75.68 acres for the noble purpose of establishing the Banaras Hindu University.

In the inner enclosure of this University, behind the Birlā Mandir, there is a house of tombs of ancient heads of the Kāśī-pīṭha. By the side of this *samādhi-mandir* there is an ancient Pipal tree under which there is set up a stone inscription. It mentions about the granting of land in ancient times by the Kāśī king Jayanandadēva to the then head of the Kāśī-pīṭha Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Saṁsthān viz., Śrī Mallikārjuna Jaṅgama. On the outskirts of the compound wall of the University, the ancient Jaṅgamapura is in actual existence.

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The devotees of this Jaṁgamapura call the *samādhi-mandir* of the Kāśī Jaṁgamavāḍi-pīṭha situated in the University campus as Jaṁgam Bābā Mandir. There is a custom prevalent to this day that, in case of any auspicious functions to be held such as marriage etc., at the outset, the Śivaliṁga placed upon the *samādhi* will be worshipped and the first invitation card will be dedicated therein. Recently, the present head of the Kāśī-pīṭha Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Dr. Chandraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi had constructed a wall around the tomb so that stray cattle will not enter the holy premises. The Mahāsvāmi had also constructed a spacious platform for the benefit of devotees to assemble and offer worship and prayers. In accomplishing this job, the valuable services of the University Professor Dr. Ramasray Prasad Singh need to be commended.

On both sides of the *Samādhi-mandir*, residential quarters for the University's Teaching Faculty have been constructed and that area is called "Hyderabad Colony". People residing in this locality offer their prayers and worship at the *Samādhi-mandir* of the Kāśī-pīṭha Jagadgurus of the past and there is a wide belief that the aspirations of such worshippers get fulfilled through the blessings of *Samādhi-mandir*.

As we have repeatedly stated above, the fact that the Kāśī Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Jñāna Siṁhāsana

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of the Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha has been historically in existence even prior to the 6th century A.D. As a matter of fact, a researcher from Allahabad with the adopted name Vyōmakēśa has written an article entitled *"Jaṁgamavāḍimaṭh Kāśī mein Surakshita Chaudāḥ sau varsh purānā śāsanādēś"* in the Bhāratīya Vidyā Bhavan Hindi monthly called *Navanīt*. In this article, the author had referred to a work called *"Vijaya Vajra Vilāsa"*, written by Gaṁgādharabhaṭṭa which includes a statement that, Jayanandadēva, the subordinate ruler of Kāśī was ruling in the 6th century A.D. and on that basis, he has also confirmed the fact that the Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha had received land grants from as early as in the 6th century from the same Jayanandadēva.

Added to this, there is a branch of Kāśī Jaṅgaṁavāḍi-maṭha in Bhaktapura (Bhātgaon) in neighbouring Nepal which is locally known as Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha. One of the early rulers of Nepal Śrī Viśvamalla had donated, in Vikrama Saṁvat 692 (635 A.D) on the 8th day of the bright fortnight of Jyēshṭha, to the then 51st Head of the Kāśīpīṭha Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi (Mallikārjuna Jaṁgama) land which fact is recorded on a stone. This inscription is preserved even to this day in the Jaṁgama Maṭha of Nepal. The facts of Jayanandadēva's land grant at Kāśī and Viśvamalla's

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land grant in Nepal both made in the 6th century A.D. doubly confirm that the Kāśīpīṭha was undoubtedly a very powerful and influential religious seat even from the times prior to the 6th century A.D. The Jaṁgama Maṭha of Nepal continues to be under the religious administration of the Kāśī-pīṭha to this day. All the Jaṁgamas of the Nepal Maṭha get their headship ordained at the Kāśī-pīṭha, adopt all the religious procedures of the Kāśī-pīṭha and, on the orders of the Kāśī-pīṭha heads, they unfailingly perform all the rituals in the Jaṁgama Maṭha. All the Jaṁgamas of the Nepal Jaṁgama Maṭha are married and follow the household duties also. At present Śrī Gōviṁdahari Jaṁgama and his sons Rāma Maṇi Jaṁgama, Bharata Maṇi Jaṁgama and Pushkara Maṇi Jaṁgama look after the welfare and day to day activities of the Jaṁgama Maṭha. For the performance of worship in the temples of the Jaṁgama Maṭha, Śrī Siddhaliṁga-śarmā (Siddhaliṁgayya) who is well versed in the Vēdic lore has been sent from the Kāśī-pīṭha to the Jaṁgama Maṭha of Nepal and he has been performing all religious duties as ordained by the head of the Kāśī-pīṭha.

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CHAPTER III

Kāśī-pīṭha and Moghal Patronage

The Firmans of the Moghal Emperors :

The Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha of Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Jñāna Siṁhāsana had received the devoted attention not only of the Hindu Kings and Emperors but also in equal measure from the Muslim Emperors of North India. From 1513 A.D. to 1668 A.D. Humāyūn, Akbar, Jahāṅgīr, Shahjahān, Aurangazeb, Dārāshikōh and Mahammadshah had ruled as Moghal Emperors and they had also made generous land grants to the Kāśī Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha. These land grants have been written in the form of official Imperial *Firmans* (meaning donative records) and they are all preserved safely in the Kāśī-pīṭha. When we add the grants recorded in these different *firmans* the total amounts to between 300 and 400 *bhīgas*. 25 *bhīgas* are equal to 1 acre. Thus as per the *firmans* of the Moghal Emperors, the lands donated to the Kāśī-pīṭha amounts to 192 acres. These lands are located in Kāśī, Chunār (Mirzapur District), Allahabad and the holy place of Gaya. In the 15th and the 16th centuries, there were a number of Jaṁgama ascetics performing penance and living in Chunār, Allahabad and Gaya as the followers of Kāśī Śrī Jagadgurus. It is for the maintenance of these

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Jaṁgama ascetics that the Muslim emperors had issued their *firmans* making land grants to the Kāśī-pīṭha. In each and every one of these *firmans*, the emperors pray that they should be blessed by the Jaṁgamas.

All the above donative *firmans* had been issued during the tenures of the 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th and 76th Heads of the Kāśī-pīṭha, Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya (Mallikārjuna Jaṁgama) Mahāsvāmīs. We should remember here that 77 of the Jagadgurus of the Kāśī-pīṭha bore the same name of Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna.

All the Heads of the Jaṁgama-pīṭha of the Kāśī Viśvārādhya Jñānasiṁhāsana were great ascetics and had obtained the blessings of Lord Śiva through Yōga Siddhi. They were reputed to have been capable of flying through the skies to Nepal, Allahabad and Gaya which were all known as holy pilgrimage centers. Having personally observed this miracle, the Moghal Emperor Humāyūn had made donations to the Kāśī-maṭha. This maṭha had a total of 1054 acres of land. The original creator of this *maṭha* was Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya. Sri Jagadguru Mallikārjuna who ascended the *pīṭha* after him, is known to have attained *samādhi* while still alive. That this *maṭha* was in existence even before the time of Aurangazeb has been recorded in the Benaras Gazetteer in the following words 'In Paragana Mahwari

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there is a state of two villages and a part covering 1054 acres which belong to the Jangambāri Uri ***maṭh*** of which the first Mahanth was Śrī Biswadhar swāmi who, with his successor, Mulkārjan swāmi is believed to be immortal and to have been buried alive in the Jangambāri. The **Maṭh** received various gifts of land in the city from Humāyūn and his descendants. The Mahants are credited with the power of performing miracles, and it was through the display of this power in the shape of a journey through the air to Nepal and elsewhere before Aurangzeb, that the **Maṭh** building was preserved'.

There is an interesting anecdote narrated in this connection. Aurangazeb, who was notorious as the most cruel and anti-Hindu Moghal Emperor, damaged the temple of Viśvēśvara of Kāśī and laid siege to the nearby Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha with the aim of destroying it. But, as he entered the main gate of the Maṭha, even at the entrance itself, a gigantic dark shadow started spewing fire through its eyes and prevented Aurangzeb's further progress. Terrified by this incident, Aurangzeb surrendered and made in writing donations of land. The concerned *firman* of Aurangazeb which is in Persian language is to this day safely preserved in the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha.

At the time of court proceedings in the Banaras District Court and Allahabad High Court in connection

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with a bank being run by the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha, all these *firmans* issued by the Moghal Emperors were examined by the legal authorities in 1932-33 and in the High Court Judgement, their genuineness was attested beyond doubt. It is interesting to note that in the course of the hearing at the Allahabad High Court, all these donative records and Moghal *firmans* of the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha were duly translated into English and also published.

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CHAPTER IV

The Vaṁśāvaḷi of the Heads of the Kāśī-pīṭha :

The lineage of the heads of the great Kāśī Jñānasiṁhāsana, which is one of the five *pīṭhas* of the ageless and deathless Vīraśaiva faith, has continued through the ages. The *Āchārya* of the Kaliyuga śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya was succeeded by Śrī 1008 Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya. The latter had attained *Śivayōga-siddhi* because of which he was enabled to adorn the *pīṭha* of the Kāśī-maṭha for as long as 311 years, at the end of which he entered *samādhi* even when he was alive. It is his *samadhi* which is even today worshipped in the Jaṅgamavāḍi-maṭha as the tomb of the establisher (of the *Maṭha*). Because of the unique greatness of this Creator-Āchārya, all the successor heads of the Kāśī-maṭha adopted his name for themselves as a tradition. It is thus that the next 77 Jagadgurus were named as Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya as recorded in the *Paṭṭavallari* (line of succession) preserved in the Kāśī-maṭha.

From the 78th Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha onwards and up to this date, whoever is the Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha also adopted, and even to this day adopts a second name besides using the traditional name of Mallikārjuna

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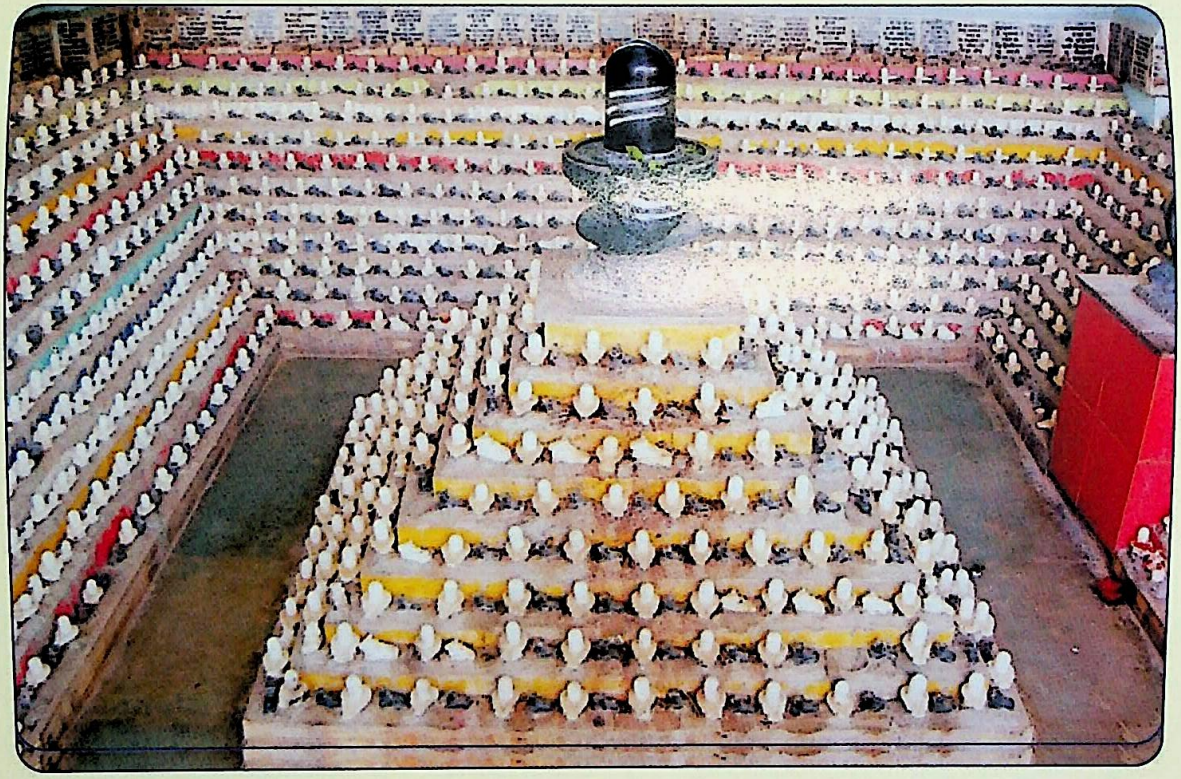

Samadhi of 77th Head of Kashipeetha
Shri 1008 Jagadguru Mallikarjuna Vishvaradhya

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Samadhi of 78th Head of Kashipeetha
Shri 1008 Jagadguru Shivalinga Shivacharya (I)

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Śivāchārya. Thus, the 78th Head of the *pīṭha* adopted the alternate name of Śrī Jagadguru Śivaliṅga Śivāchārya.

The 77th Śrī 1008 Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi and the 78th Śrī 1008 Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi *alias* Śrī 1008 Śrī Jagadguru Śivaliṅga Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi I :

As we have stated above, the 77th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha had attained the bliss of *Śivayōga-siddhi.* Even during his life time, the 77th *Āchārya* selected a celibate boy by name Śivaliṅgadēvaru who was at that time a student at the Kāśī-pīṭha. In 1750 A.D. the 77th *Āchārya* ordained him with his own holy hands, as an ascetic, gave him the traditional name of Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya and also gave him the alternate name of Śrī Jagadguru Śivaliṅga Śivāchārya based on his name before his anointment. The 77th pontiff was the Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha for 40 years from 1710 to 1750 A.D. and continued to implement,with great efficiency, all the religious affairs of the *pīṭha.* Ultimately, in 1750, he transferred the powers of the head of the Kāśī-pīṭha to Śivaliṅga Śivāchārya, had his own *samādhi* built and through his accomplished skill as a *Yōgin* entered the *samādhi* alive. The 78th Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya *alias* Śrī

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1008 Jagadguru Śivaliṁga Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi I, after inheriting the Headship of the *pīṭha* on the orders of his senior Mahāsvāmi began to administer the affairs of the Kāśī-pīṭha on approved traditional lines and, at the same time, also began to improve his own skills as a *Yōgin*. He managed the affairs of the Kāśī-pīṭha as its Head for 75 years from 1750 A.D. to 1825 A.D.

Since he had gained inspiration from his *Guru*, who had entered the *samādhi* alive, he also developed a keen desire to follow his Master's way and began to think about the selection of a suitable successor for the Kāśī-pīṭha. At that time, there were a number of students who were getting educated at the Kāśī-pīṭha in higher Sanskrit. Among them, a celibate boy named Śrī Siddhaliṅgadēva was very handsome, very intelligent and had great inclination towards *Yōga* and this was duly noticed by Śrī 1008 Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi. In 1825, he selected him and with his own holy hands, anointed this Siddhaliṅgadēva as the Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha by performing all necessary religious rituals and gave him the traditional name of Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya besides giving him the alternate name of Śrī 1008 Śrī Jagadguru Harēśvara Śivāchārya. After this, when a few months had passed by, he also

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got constructed a *samādhi* for himself and entered the same in 1825, when he was still alive.

The fact that the 77th and 78th heads of the Kāśī-pīṭha had entered *samādhi* while still alive came to light in 2005 A.D. when the work of renovating the *pīṭha* was undertaken. In that year, the work of constructing a new library was begun. It was at that time that the *samādhis* of the two *Āchāryas* was also being renovated. For that purpose it was necessary for the renovators to go down the steps of the *Samādhi-mandir* and remove the stone slabs which were placed against the triangular face of the two *samādhis* with the help of the workers who were repairing the *Samādhi-mandir*. When this work had been done, Sri Gaṁgādhara Chiramme, the Executive Officer found out inside both these *samādhis* the complete skeletons of these two Jagadgurus seated in
Śivayōga-mudrā.

In addition to this, he also came across another important sight which can be described as follows: From the inner part of these two *samādhis*, through the old wall of the previous *Samādhi-mandir* till the cornice of the building, a copper pipe 3 inches in girth had been attached. On top of the copper pipe, as also in the lower part of the opening of the pipe, two copper pots with riddled holes had been welded. What one can

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gather from this is that though these two Jagadgurus had attained *Śivayōga-siddhi*, they had, during their last days, got constructed their own *samādhis* and, in order to be able to breathe, they had made this arrangement of the pipes and the riddled copper pots when they were sitting in *Samādhi-yōga*. It is thus claimed that these two heads of the *pīṭha* had attained *Jīvanta-samādhi*. After surveying the two *samādhis*, the stone was restored to its former position and these two *samādhis* were closed and on top of the two were placed two Śivaliṅgas. Like all other *Samādhi-Śivaliṅgas*, these two Śivaliṅgas are also offered ritual worships every day. The devotees who visit Kāśī have planted numerous Śivaliṅgas in memory of their own ancestors around these two *samādhis*.

79th Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Harēśvara (Siddhaliṅga) Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi:

The 79th Head of the Kāśī Mahāpīṭha, Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Harēśvara (Siddhaliṅga) Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi inherited the right of the headship of the Kāśī-pīṭha in 1825 A.D. from his teacher Śrī 1008 Śrī Jagadguru Śivaliṅga Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi. In his appearance, he was a very well built personality with good looks and with matted hair. He had entered the Kāśī-pīṭha for his studies and had mastered the different *śāstrās* with

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the help of the scholars teaching in the Kāśī-pīṭha. It is only after recognizing his scholarship, his modesty and his firm addiction to Śivayōga, that the 78th Jagadguru blessed him with the headship of the Kāśī-maṭha even during his life time. Through his asceticism and scholarship, Śrī Harēśvara Mahāsannidhi had become famous everywhere. It is only on hearing his fame that the then Mahārājā of Mysore, Kṛisṇarāja Woḍeyar III, brought him to the city of Mysore, with all royal paraphernalia and, in keeping with the traditions of the Kāśī-pīṭha, he got performed in honour of the *Āchārya* the festival of carrying him on palanquin and offered him with great devotion the royal honours of umbrella, chowries, religious staffs, etc. On all these gift objects, the sign manual "Śrī Kṛishṇa" of the Mahārāja is engraved. Besides doing these honours, the Mahārājā also made a land grant in Mysore to the Kāśī-pīṭha. On that land stands today the Kāśiviśvēśvara temple. The Mahārājā had also granted enough plain lands all around the temple.

Having offered all types of honour to Śrī Harēśvara (Siddhaliṅga) Mahāsvāmi, Kṛishṇarāja Woḍeyar III also gave a copper plate grant in which details of all the donations were engraved. In that copper plate grant is found engraved the following words; "having made a request that for all times to come 12 Māhēśvaras were

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to be fed every year in the Kāśī-pīṭha on his Royal Highness's birth day 600 rupees were to be sent to the Kāśī-pīṭha". This was recorded on 10. 7. 1846 on the copper plate and the Mahārājā had also affixed his sign manual and presented it to the Kāśī-pīṭha. This donation used to be regularly received at the Kāśī-pīṭha until the day when the native states of the country were merged with the Indian Union. This copper plate grant of Kṛishṇarāja Woḍeyar III is kept under safe custody even today in the Kāśī-pīṭha.

In this manner, Śrī Harēśvara Mahāsannidhi showered his divine blessings on kings and emperors through his skilled *Śivayōga* and enriched the Kāśī-pīṭha by obtaining generous grants from those rulers. He performed all this ritual duties as the 79th Head of the *pīṭha* for 54 years from 1825 A.D. to 1879 A.D.

In his 59th year, i.e., in 1865 A.D., he selected as his successor a celibate boy Vīrabhadra Śivāchārya who was the Head of a religious institution in Bōdhana town in Andhra Pradesh and who, among all the students studying in the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha, had proved himself as very intelligent, well versed in administrative matters and was capable of discharging all his responsibilities in full measure. He also conferred on him the temporary charge of running the affairs of the Kāśī-pīṭha. On the occasion of this religious conferment, the itinerant *Āchārya*

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Śaṅkarayyasvāmi of Vīraśaiva-saṁsthāna of Pāṁḍhurṇā, the itinerant *Āchārya* Nāgaliṁgasvāmi of Pāṇḍa-maṭha, Śivaliṁgasvāmi of Bōdhana-maṭha, Dēśika Nāgaliṁgasvāmi of Sollāpura, Dēśika Sadāśivasvāmi of Āshṭhī Saṁsthāna-maṭha, Dēśika Mūrti Gurupādayyasvāmi of Kittūra-maṭha, Dēśika Basavaliṁgayyasvāmi also of Kittūr, Pārēkar Rāmaliṁgayyasvāmi, Siddharāmayyasvāmi of Chikkalgūḍ, Maḍivāḷayya Śāstry of Kavaḷāsa, Kāśīnāthayyasvāmi of Nāgapura, Nāgaliṁgayyasvāmi of Pāṁḍhurṇā, Śivasaṁgayyasvāmi of Mahārāja-maṭha of Hanagali, Śrī Śarabhayya, Śrī Channabasayya, Śrī Rājēśvara and Śrī Viśvanāthasvāmi as also all the heads of *Maṭhas* and students who were studying different subjects in the Kāśī-pīṭha were present. As per the orders of his Guru, Harēśvara Siddhaliṅga Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi, his disciple Vīrabhadra Śivāchāryasvāmi began conducting all the affairs of the Kāśī-pīṭha. Having observed from close quarters his skill in handling the affairs of the *pīṭha*, the venerable *Āchārya* Mahāsannidhi prepared his death deed (Will) and handed over the same to his disciple with more administrative responsibilities.[6]

He completed the formalities of handing over the full powers of the Headship of the Maṭha in the next one or two years to Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya *alias* Vīrabhadra Śivāchārya. Subsequently, in the year 1879, Śrī 1008 Jagadguru

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Harēśvara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi shed his mortal coils and merged with the liṅga. In the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha, his *Samādhi-Mandira* is known as Harēśvara-Mandira.

80th Śrī 1008 Vīrabhadra Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi I: Prior to his anointment as the Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, he belonged to the Maṭha in the town Bōdhana in Nizamabad District of Andhra Pradesh. He was born in 1843 A.D. He completed his primary education in his village. After that, he accepted the headship of the Bōdhana-maṭha and for higher studies in Sanskrit, he went over to the Kāśī-kshetra in the year 1863. With the permission of the then 79th Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha he got admission to the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha for his higher education. In due course, he made a deep study of such subjects as grammar, literature, logic, philosophy from scholars in the Kāśī-kshetra. Possessed as he was with a tall physique and sharp intellect, he, with his power of attraction, became the most favourite student of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Harēśvara Mahāsannidhi. It was but natural, therefore, that in the year 1865, the 79th Jagadguru conferred on him, after performing all necessary religious rituals, the future headship of the Kāśī-pīṭha and declared him as his official disciple.

In course of time, Śrī Vīrabhadrasvāmi began to undertake greater and greater responsibilities in the affairs of the Kāśī-pīṭha and observing this, Śrī Harēśvara

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Jagadguru gave in his name his own death deed (Will) on 9.3.1872. In the next two or three years, Śrī Vīrabhadrasvāmi took upon himself the full authority of running the Kāśī-pīṭha after obtaining necessary approval from his Guru Harēśvara Jagadguru.

Having thus obtained the authority over the Kāśī-pīṭha as its 80th Jagadguru, Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Vīrabhadra Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi served as the Head of that *pīṭha* for 12 years from 1879 to 1891. He conducted many activities which were oriented towards the expansion of the Kāśī-pīṭha as well as the expansion of its religious activities. During his headship of the *Maṭha*, Chikkavīra Rājēndra, the king of Koḍagu, and his entire family and retinue came to reside in Kāśī.

Becaue this Koḍagu Ruler was the disciple of the Kāśī-pīṭha, the *Mahārāṇi* of Koḍagu made grants to the *pīṭha* for its improvements and for the performance of religious rituals. As a tribute to the generosity of this *Mahārāṇi* Śrī Vīrabhadra Jagadguru got constructed in the name of the queen a choultry and also arranged for daily free-feeding of disciples in her name. Besides, the Jagadguru also got constructed a beautiful stone *maṇṭapa* over the *samādhi* of his Guru Śrī Harēśvara Jagadguru. It is this *maṇṭapa* which is today well known as Harēśvara-mandira. Moreover, this Jagadguru also built a huge Durbar Hall with stone pillars on top

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of which, he also built an Art Gallery and a Hall named after Lord Gaṇēśa. This building which attracts the attention of all visitors who enter the ***Maṭha*** from the main gateway on the west with its numerous pillars is a tribute to the creative skill of Śrī Vīrabhadra Jagadguru.

Since the Kāśī-pīṭha had received patronage from the ruler of Koḍagu, Śrī Jagadguru Vīrabhadra Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi gave permission to the king as well as his retinue for building memorial temples in the precincts of the Kāśīpīṭha. In the meanwhile, king Chikkavīrarājēndra of Koḍagu, the husband of the crowned queen Nañjammāji, had passed away in England. The queen arranged to bring the dead body of the late king by ship from England to India and had him interred in the precinct of the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha in Kāśī-kshetra. Over that burial, a beautiful stone monument was built on 12.2.1862 and on top of that monument a Śivaliṅga was installed and given the name of Vīrēśvara Liṁga by the queen.

That tomb temple had been built by one Mūlchand. All these details have been engraved on the wall of the tomb temple both in Kannada and Hindi. This beautiful and ancient tomb-temple is one of the major attractions of the Kāśī-pīṭha. The Śivaliṅga in this tomb temple got somehow damaged and in the year 2002, a new

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Śivaliṁga was installed by the present Head of the *pīṭha* Śrī Jagadguru Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi, who also got performed for that Śivaliṁga *Atirudra-abhishēka* and has created facilities for all people to offer worship.

Śrī Jagadguru Vīrabhadra Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi was, during his occupation of the Kāśī-pīṭha, worshipped by royal houses and he blessed all those royal families and on 17.8.1891 gave his death deed[7] (Will) to his favourite student Rājēśvarasvāmi whom he had desired to nominate as his successor. During his last days he suffered from cholera and attained salvation on 18.8.1891, the very day after he had appointed his successor. Śrī Jagadguru Vīrabhadra Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi was only 48 years old when his soul merged with the Liṁga. His memorial has been built in the Harēśvara-mandira.

Liṁgaikya Vīrabhadra Jagadguru was an extremely powerful personality during his headship of the Kāśī-pīṭha. In those days of British Raj every collector who used to visit Kāśī would unfailingly also visit the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha and meet the Jagadguru and obtain his audience as well as blessings. During his administration, he introduced many improvements in the feeding house of the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha, so that all the pilgrims and all the students of Sanskirt coming from outside could be given free food without any

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difficulty. Though he has had a very short spell of 12 years as Head of the *pīṭha*, even in that short span of time, he had introduced considerable improvements in the affairs of the *Maṭha*.

81st Śrī Rājēśvara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi :

The 81st Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha was Śrī Jagadguru Rājēśvara Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi. Prior to becoming the Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha he belonged to the town of Rājamahēndravaram in the East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh. Born in the year 1845, he completed his primary education in his own village. He then proceeded to Kāśī-kshetra for his higher education. After obtaining permission from the then 80th Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha he entered the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha of Viśvārādhya Siṁhāsana in the year 1865. A person of very serene disposition and humility, he studied under the scholars of the Kāśī-pīṭha subjects such as literature, grammar, etc. During the days of his studentship, he also developed an inclination for living as a recluse and in ascetic austerities. He also became the disciple of 80th Jagadguru Vīrabhadra Śivāchārya I. When Vīrabhadra Jagadguru became afflicted with cholera, he nominated, on 17.8.1891, Rājēśvarasvāmi as his successor and formallly anointed him after putting on record his death deed (Will). By a quirk of fate, Śrī Vīrabhadra Jagadguru's cholera became acute and on the very next

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day, after anointing his disciple, his soul merged with the Liṁga on 18.8.1891. It was at that time that Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mallikārjua Viśvārādhya Śivāchāryasvāmi *alias* Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Rājēśvara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi took charge of the Kāśī-pīṭha as its 81st head. Because Śrī Rājēśvara Mahāsannidhi was by nature very generous, he never sent away any supplicant with an empty hand. Highly impressed by his generosity, the residents of Kāśī used to fondly call him as "Jaṁgamarāja".

Besides himself being a noted scholar, Śrī Jagadguru Rājēśvara Mahāsannidhi used to invite other scholars and honour them. During his Headship, *Mahāmahōpādhyāya Paṁḍita* Śivakumāra Miśrā, who was considered as the very incarnation of Viśvanātha, had developed great respect for Rājēśvara Jagadguru. He used to visit the *pīṭha* often and obtain the blessings of the Jagadguru. Once, when Śivakumāra Miśrā was suffering from stomach ache and could not visit the *pīṭha*, on coming to know of his ailment, Śrī Rājēśvara Jagadguru sent to Śivakumāra Miśra for his consumption, the sacred leaves, which had been placed on the Jagadguru's Ishṭaliṁga, after performing *pūjā*.

When Śivakumāra Miśrā took those holy *Bilva* leaves with great devotion, he was cured of his stomach ailment on the same day. Pleased with this miraculous cure, Śivakumāra Miśrā went to the Kāśī-

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pīṭha and after obtaining the Śrī Sannidhi's audience, requested him to tell him which Śivaliṁga was chosen for placing those *Bilva* leaves on top. The Jagadguru replied that they were placed on his Iṣṭaliṁga. On hearing this, Śivakumāra Miśrā developed great devotion towards Iṣṭaliṁga. As a result *Paṁḍita* Śivakumāra Miśrā wrote a Sanskrit commentary called "*Śarat*" on "*Śrī Liṁgadhāraṇa Chaṁdrikā*" written by Śrī Naṁdikēśvara Śivāchārya and presented the same to Rājēśvara Mahāsannidhi.

This "*Śarat*" commentary along with the '*Liṁgadhāraṇa Chaṁdrikā*' was printed and published by the Kāśī-pīṭha in the year 1905. Because the commentary was written by no less a person than *Paṁḍita* Śivakumāra Miśra, the scholars of Kāśī look upon that work with great devotional feelings. In the same manner, during the headship of Śrī Jagadguru Rājēśvara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi, there developed a very close relationship between the Kāśī-pīṭha and reputed scholars. Śrī Rājēśvara Jagadguru also made improvements in the arrangements for feeding the students coming to Kāśī for studying Sanskrit from different regions like Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra, etc. In those days, hundreds of students were studying in Kāśī-pīṭha subjects such as grammar, logic, literature and the Vēdic lores. Śrī Jagadguru Rājēśvara Mahāsvāmi wrote down his

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death deed[8] (Will) in his 52nd year on 2.7.1892 in the name of Śrī Śivaliṁgasvāmi of Sollāpura, who was one of the students of Kāśī-pīṭha. He also performed his anointment as the successor head of the Kāśī-pīṭha under the name of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Śivāchārya *alias* Śivaliṁga Śivāchārya. From that day onwards, he transferred to his chosen disciple most of the administrative responsibilities of the Kāśī-pīṭha.

After serving for 16 years as the Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, Śrī Rājēśvara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi merged with the Liṁga on 31.7.1907 at the age of 62 years. His *samādhi* has also been built in the Harēśvara-mandira of Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha.

82nd Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Śivaliṁga Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi :

Prior to his ascending the Kāśī-pīṭha, as its 82nd pontiff, Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya *alias* Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Śivaliṁga Śivāchārya was born in the year 1865 in a Māhēśvara family in the town of Sollāpura in Mahārāshṭra. There itself, he completed his primary and middle school education. Soon after, he was appointed as the head of the Lāḷaguṁḍi-maṭha which followed the *virakta* tradition and was adjacent to the Śivānubhava Maṁgaḷa Kāryālaya

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in Mīṭagalli in Maṁgaḷavārapēṭa in the western part of Sollāpura.

Afterwards, he entered the famous Saṁskṛita Pāṭhaśālā of the Vīraśaiva-vāra. After studying the *paṁchakāvyas* in that *Pāṭhaśālā*, with the encouragement and under the orders of Śrī Vārada Mallappa, he proceeded to the Kāśī-kshetra for higher studies. With the permission of the then 81st Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha he entered the Kāśī Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha in the year 1885.

He made a deep study of grammar, literature and logic from the *paṁḍitas* of Kāśī-kshetra and, specializing in the field of logic, he became an excellent scholar in that subject. Among the students, who were at that time studying in the Kāśī-pīṭha, he outshone all other students in intelligence and in exhibiting his scholarship.

Along with his studies, he also kept himself active by being in the forefront of various services offered by the Kāśī-pīṭha. The then 81st h ead of the Kāśī-pīṭha was closely observing his aptitude for higher education, his skill in administrative work and the interest with which he was involving himself in the affairs of the Kāśī-pīṭha. He began to feel that the latter should be groomed as his successor. That feeling which had sprouted in his mind began to grow into a confirmed decision in course of time. As a result, on him the

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coronation name of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya *alias* Śrī Jagadguru Mahant Śivaliṁga Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi and handed over to him his death deed (Will). After he secured the headship of the *pīṭha*, till 31.7.1907, for a period of 10 years, this heir to the *pīṭha* jointly administered the affairs of the Kāśī-pīṭha and also, on the orders of his *Guru*, conducted the religious activities of the *Maṭha*. He established in the Kāśī-pīṭha, the Viśvārādhya Bank and started administering the financial affairs of the Kāśī-pīṭha on very sound grounds. Besides keeping in safe deposit the money invested by his followers in that bank, he also regularly paid them their interests during his lifetime. The Bank had soon become very famous in Kāśī-kshetra.

In course of time, i.e., in the year 1907 Śrī Jagadguru Rājēśvara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi's soul merged with the Liṁga. After that the entire responsibility of running the religious as well as administrative affairs of the Kāśī-pīṭha fell on the shoulders of Śrī Śivaliṁga Mahāsvāmi and he initiated a number of progressive steps for the all-round development of the *pīṭha* for 25 years till the year 1932.

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CHAPTER V

Establishment of Development Fund for Śrī Kāśī Vīraśaiva Vidyādharma :

The 82nd head of the *pīṭha* was very highly educated in higher fields of studies. He had suffered poverty in his younger days. He had always felt that many deserving youngsters had been deprived of the chance of education because of poverty. He, therefore, began to think about finding some permanent solution to get rid of this problem. In the year 1910 (Śaka 1832), on the 14th day of the dark fortnight of the month of Māgha which was a Monday, the *Dharmasabhā* of Mahāśivarātri was held in the Kāśī-pīṭha. While addressing the gathering on that occasion, the Mahāsannidhi, in the course of giving his blessing-discourse, referred to this problem faced by indigent students. In response to this the heads of various *Maṭhas* and also the devotees began to seriously ponder over the issue raised by the Sannidhi and they also assured the Sannidhi that all of them were determined to contribute, through physical, mental and financial help, to whatever project the Sannidhi thinks of promoting, in order to overcome this problem.

Encouraged by the interest shown by the heads of the *Maṭhas* and by the devotees, the Mahāsannidhi

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decided to establish a permanent fund for the dissemination of knowledge. He announced at that gathering itself the establishment of a financial institution by the name of "Śrī Kāśī Vīraśaiva Vidyā Dharmābhivṛidhi Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi Fund". The Mahāsannidhi also announced on the spot, with his blessings, a donation of Rs.10,005/- on behalf of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Jñāna Siṁhāsana Saṁsthāna. In spontaneous response to the Mahāsannidhi's gesture, the following heads of Mutts and devotees present at the gathering announced their own grants: The head of the Atanūru Maṭha Śrī Gurusiddha Śivāchāryasvāmi, Rs. 101/-; The head of the Mālagāvi Maṭha Śrī Gaṁgādharasvāmi, Rs. 101/-; Śrī Nīlakaṁṭhappa of Niḍasōsi, Rs. 25/-; Śrī Guruliṁgappaṇṇa Satyaṇṇa Pāṁge Nāgāvīkar, Rs.1001/-; Śrī Bāpūrao Thobaḍe, Sollāpura, Rs. 100/-; Śrī Rāmappa Bhōgaḍe, Sōlāpura, Rs. 51/-; Śrī Bhīmaṇṇa Sōlāpura, Rs. 25/-. Similarly, in the same gathering, some other persons also donated different amounts. In the *Dharmasabhā* which was held the next day, the head of the Mānūru Maṭha, Śri Śrīgiri Śivāchāryasvāmi donated Rs. 101/-; Śrī Guruliṁgavaḍḍinaśetty of Bellary gave Rs. 25/-; and Śrī Mahārudrappa Khēṇi of Hyderabad gave Rs. 1000/- for the above fund and thus earned the blessings of Śrī-Sannidhi.

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Śrī Mahāsannidhi, following these developments, constituted an Administrative Committee to oversee further collections for the fund and for the proper distribution of the collected funds to institutions which have been identified for the promotion of the education of the poor. This committee consisted of Śrī Gurusiddha Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi of Pāragaon, Śrī Gaṁgādharasvāmi of Malagaon, Śrī 10th Huchchēśvarasvāmi of Kamatagi, Śrī Gurusiddhadēva of Yakkuṇḍi, Śrī Śivaliṁgadēva of Hoḷal, Śrī Chandraśēkhara Śāstri of Dēvihōsūr, Śrī Sadāśiva Śāstri of Abbigēri, Śrī Kaligaṇanātha Śāstri of Agaḍadinni, Śrī Viśvēśvara Vidyāratna Bhaṭṭāchārya of Bengal, Śrī Mallikārjuna Bāpu Ayya of Khatugaon, Śrīkaṁṭha Śāstri of Sūḍi, Gurusaṁgha Śāstri, Gaurīśaṁkara Śāstri of Muddāballi, Śaṁkara Śāstri Puṇē of Mysore and *Paṁḍita* Bhālāksha Śāstri, the then *Sarvvādhikāri* of Viśvārādhya Jñānasiṁhāsana Saṁsthāna.

The Aims and Objectives of the Fund :

Kāśī-kshetra was home to all branches of studies and students used to visit that place from different countries and different regions of India for higher studies and, therefore, it was decided to have Kāśī Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha as the headquarters of the 'Śrī Kāśī

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Vīraśaiva Vidyā Dharmābhivṛiddhi Fund'. It was also decided that whoever wishes to establish Sanskrit and Vēdic *Pāṭhaśālās* in areas such as Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra can write a letter of request either to the Mahāsannidhi or to the Administrative Committee, in response to which a Teacher will be sent from Kāśī itself to the concerned *Pāṭhaśālā* and his monthly remuneration will be met from the above fund. In this manner, the Mahāsannidhi realized his noble objective by sending teachers from Śrī Kāśī-pīṭha itself to a number of *Pāṭhaśālās* established in different regions by advertising the news about the establishment and aims and objectives of the above fund. The efforts of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Śivaliṁga Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi in promoting the education of the Vīraśaiva community through this educational project was indeed a great achievement involving very hard work on the part of the Mahāsannidhi.

Donation of Land to the Banaras Hindu University :

The great intellectual Madan Mohan Māḷavīya established the Banaras Hindu University and had it inaugurated by the British Viceroy of India, Lord Hardinge on Friday the 4th of February 1916. As a prelude to the establishment of this University, which is now world

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famous, Śrī Māḷavīya had to secure the necessary land and funds and for that purpose he approached many Landlords and Rulers and Kings. The success he met with in getting sufficient land grants and funds from these patrons is very well known. In the course of his acquisition of land for the necessary extent of area for the University, Māḷavīya had gone to a number of Land Lords and one day he also approached the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha seeking donation of land. He submitted his request to the then Head of the Kāśī-maṭha Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Śivaliṁga Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi for allotment of land in Jaṁgamapura.

We have already pointed out the historical facts that in 574 A.D., the then Ruler of Kāśi Jayanaṁdadēva had donated land to the then 51st head of the Kāśīpīṭha Śrī Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Śivāchārya (Mallikārjuna Jaṁgama) Mahāsvāmi, so that he and his successors may get divine blessings. That land to the extent of 365 acres of grass-land was donated to the Mahāsvāmi so that the cattle of the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha can be grazed in that particular area. On that vast land, on the same day of receiving it from the Kāśī Ruler, the Jagadguru had established Jaṁgamapura.

Śrī Madan Mohan Māḷavīya had realized that the Jaṁgamapura land would be very useful in establishing the University and accordingly he submitted a request

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to Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Śivaliṁga Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi, who donated with great pleasure 75.68 acres of land in Jaṁgamapura for the construction of the Banaras Hindu University. This information of land gift to the University by the Head of the Kāśīpīṭha is recorded in the "History of the Banaras Hindu University".

In this manner, the Jagadguru had created history in the field of education by donating land to Śrī Madana Mōhana Māḷavīya. This is indeed a very important point in the history of the Kāśī-maṭha.

The 1st Jagadguru Paṁchāchārya Conference in Kāśī and Establishment of Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Gurukula :

We have noticed above that the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha was always thinking about problems in the religious, social and educational fields. As a follow up measure the 82nd Jagadguru decided to discuss these seemingly insurmountable problems with the heads of the *Paṁchapīṭha* and pass necessary resolutions with the determination to implement those resolutions. In order to send orders to all the heads of the *Maṭhas* and to all social organizations regarding the implementation of these resolutions, the 82nd Jagadguru organized a conference of the 5 Jagadguru *Āchāryas* on the auspicious occasion of Mahāśivarātri in the month of March 1918.

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He invited, with great sincerity, the Jagadgurus of the other four Paṁchāchārya-pīṭhas. Three Jagadgurus viz., those of the Raṁbhāpuri-pīṭha, the Ujjayinī-pīṭha and the Girirājasūrya Siṁhāsana went over to Kāśī-kshetra on the appointed day. Though the invitation was sent to the Kēdāra-pīṭha, the then head of that *pīṭha* could not himself attend the conference because of ill health, but he sent a message to the 82nd Jagadguru of the Kāśī-pīṭha to the effect that he will abide by all the resolutions that will be passed at the conference. The 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha personally visited the abodes in which those *Āchāryas* who had responded to his invitation had been lodged and garlanded them as a mark of welcome. In Kāśī-kshetra, on 10.3.1918, devotees were lucky enough to watch the unique event of all the four Jagadgurus being carried on palanquins in great festive mood. The palanquin procession started on that Sunday at 3.30 pm and, after going through all the major roads of Kāśī-kshetra, reached the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha at 8.30 pm. In this unique procession, eight elephants, sent specially for this purpose by the Mahārājās of Kāśī and Vijayanagara, as well as various musical instruments and thousands of devotees who had come from Karnataka, Mahārāshtra and other regions took part. This was indeed an unprecedented festival for the residents of Kāśī. At the end of this palanquin festival,

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all the Heads of the *pīṭhas* took rest in the Kāśī-pīṭha. The next day, i.e., on 11.3.1918, Monday, the procession of the Viśvārādhya *Utsavamūrti,* placed on the newly prepared silver chariot, covered all the major roads of Kāśī with great pomp and festivity on the occasion of Mahāśivarātri. After a day's gap, on March 13th, 14th and 15th, the conference of the Jagadguru Paṁchāchāryas was held as per the predetermined programmes. Very important resolutions on religious and social matters were passed in this three day conference. Later, on 22.3.1918, a meeting of scholars was arranged under the Presidentship of the four heads of the Paṁchapīṭhas. In this scholarly event, a number of *paṁḍitas* including the *Mahāmahōpādhyāyas* of Kāśī participated. There were scholarly discussions in that gathering. At the end, all the scholars were honoured and were presented with money and *tāṁbūla* (betel leaves with arecanut).

On 23.3.1918, the Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Gurukula was founded to commemorate the conference of the Jagadguru Paṁchāchāryas. On that occasion, a stone plaque engraved with the word "Śrīmad Jagadguru Paṁchāchārya Sammēḷana Smāraka Sthāpita Gurukulaṁ" was installed and sanctified at the hands of the Paṁchapīṭha Jagadgurus. To coincide with that event, the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha announced a donation of Rs.75,000/- for the construction of the Gurukula

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building. The other Heads of the Paṁchāchārya-pīṭhas assured, in their speeches, that they will make necessary financial contributions for the purchase of books etc, for the students and also for their boarding. It was thus that, under the leadership of the 82nd head of the Kāśīpīṭha, the 1st Conference of the Paṁchāchārya Jagadgurus was conducted on an unprecedented scale and the above Gurukula was formally established. All the activities in connection with this important conference were properly programmed and implemented by *Paṁḍita* Kāśīnātha Śāstri of the Bṛihanmaṭha of Nāganūru in his capacity as the Secretary of the Conference. Śrī H. S. Śivaliṁga Śāstri of Dharwar brought out, in print, the full proceedings of the Paṁchāchārya Sammēḷana printed in his Dharmataraṁgiṇi Press.

Arrangement of the Sacred Fire-pit in Kāśī :

Every 12 years, there was the practice of the *Pūrṇakumbha* festival which on its turn fell in the year 1929. Using this occasion, the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha arranged for the Sacrificial Firepit of Dakshabrahma in the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha which was meant to be destroyed reflecting the destruction of ancient Dakshabrahma Yajñakuṁḍa by Vīrabhadra. Many members of the *Puravaṁta* sect from Karnataka and Maharashtra took part in this event. All these participants

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wore traditional dresses and ornaments and, singing the folksongs of Vīrabhadra and shouting victorious slogans, spiritedly walked on the burning fire, piercing their jaw, lips and tongues with copper and silver spears and thus stunned the audience. The people and scholars of Kāśī who had witnessed this heroic act of the *Puravaṁta* devotees of Vīrabhadra remember this event even to this day with a sense of thrill. Perhaps, it is with the idea of acquainting the North Indians with the miracle of Vīrabhadra of South India that the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha had arranged this event.

Mahārudrābhishēka in Paraḷī-kshetra :

The Vaidayanātha-liṁga of Paraḷī is reputed to be one of the 12 Jyōtirliṁgas. Śrī Śivakōṭi Vīrabhadrasvāmi of Andhra Pradesh reached Paraḷī-kshetra in 1924 with the idea of performing *Mahārudrābhishēka* for Vaidyanātha. He made arrangements for this *abhishēka* planning to take the help of the Māhēśvara (Jaṁgama) priests of Paraḷī. At that time, the local Brāhmaṇa *vaidikas* requested that they should also be associated with the performance of this *abhishēka* ceremony. But, Śivakōṭi Vīrabhadraiah, being a great devotee of Śiva, did not accede to this request. Enraged by this, the Brāhmaṇa *vaidikas* approached the Court of the Nizam's Government and

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presented a petition to the effect that the Māhēśvaras had no right to read the Vēdas and, therefore, they should not be permitted to conduct the *Mahārudrābhishēka*. This was done with the sole of idea of preventing Śivakōṭi Vīrabhadraiah from performing the said *abhishēka*. On the *vaidika* Brāhmaṇas presenting their petition, the Court took up the issue and the case went on for 6 long years with scholars from both factions presenting their arguments in the Court of the Nizam's Government. Ultimately, as a result of the logical arguments put forth by *Vēdatīrtha Paṁḍita* Virūpāksha Woḍeyar, the Vīraśaiva-samāja registered its victory in this Paraḷī matter. In this whole episode of the victory scored by the Vīraśaiva-samāja, the letters written by a number of honorable people as well as the Heads of *Maṭhas* proved to be of great significance. The great service rendered by Śrī Kumārasvāmi of Hanagal, the foremost among the *viraktas*, along with a number of his devotees in providing facilities throughout the period when the case was going on in the court is unforgettable. With the idea of celebrating on a grand scale the festival of victory obtained by the entire Vīraśaiva community, a committee for performing the Vīraśaiva *Mahārudrābhishēka* was established at Paraḷī. Śrī Viśvanāthappā Karabasappa Hatte of Sindhakhēra was unanimously elected as the

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President of this committee. Śrī Viśvanāthappā Hatte decided to fulfill the vow of Śrī Śivakōṭi Vīrabhadrasvāmi by performing on a grand scale the *Mahārudrābhishēka* of Paraḷī Vaidyanātha.

Accordingly, from the full Moon day of Vaiśākha in the Śaka year 1852 until the 9th day of the dark fortnight i.e., from 12.5.1930 to 22.5.1930 for 11 days, a mega religious festivity was arranged. For this event, the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha as well as a few other important religious personalities and erudite scholars of Kāśī were invited along with many devotees of Vīraśaivism.

In connection with this festivity, scholarly religious discourses by *Paṁ.* Śaṁbhuliṁga Śivāchārya Svāmi were arranged from 12.5.1930 to 22.5.1930. In between, for 3 days from 19.5.1930 to 21.5.1930, under the Chairmanship of Prof. Virūpāksha Śivāchāryasvāmi Woḍeyar, a number of religious debates were also conducted on various subjects. Thus while, on the one side, scholarly as well as public meetings were going on, on the other side in the temple, under the leadership of *Vēdatīrtha Paṁḍita* Vīrabhadraśarmā, the scholarly Vīramāhēśvara-vaidikas were pouring the *sahasradhārā* ablution from the *dhārāpātra* on the head of Vaidyanātha Mahādēva, at the same time chanting the praise of Rudra. Thus was the *Mahārudrābhisheka* performed. While, in this

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manner, the religious activities were taking place on a very grand scale in Paraḷī-kshetra, there was organized, as a claimax to the whole event, the very important activity, viz., the festive and grand palanquin procession of Kāśī Jagadguru.

As had been decided earlier itself, on the 5th day of the dark fortnight of Vaiśakha, on 17.5.1930, Saturday, the palanquin procession of the 82nd Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha was taken through all the main streets of Paraḷī with great pomp and with all necessary paraphernalia. In this event, a large number of *Sumaṁgalīs* (married women) holding pots and mirrors also took part. In front of the procession not only were a number of musical instruments being played but also an elephant with his majestic gait was seen. Countless number of devotees took part in this procession and they included Dēśmukhs, Dēśpāṇḍēs, Pāṭīls, Kulakarṇis, Advocates, Barristers and several govt. officials. After this Palanquin festival of Śrī Mahāsannidhi, for the next 3 days from 20.5.1930 to 22.5.1930, in the divine presence of the Mahāsannidhi special religious congregations were held. In those congregations, the Mahāsannidhi honoured with his blessings all those important citizens who had worked night and day for the successful conduct of the *Mahārudrābhishēka* including Śivakōṭi Vīrabhadrasvāmi. On 21.5.1930, Kāśī Jagadguru Mahāsannidhi conferred

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different titles on *Paṁḍitas*, Poets and Artists who had earned special name and fame through their work.

This *Mahārudrābhishēka* and various other connected religious activities which were held in the divine presence of the 82nd Head of the Kāśī-maṭha in Paraḷī-kshetra remain to this day green in the memory of those who had attended the mega event.

The Succession Ceremony of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya :

The 82nd Head of the Kāśīpīṭha, whose memorable achievements have been recorded above, had served as the head of the *Maṭha* for 25 uninterrupted years from 1907 to 1932. During that period, he had conducted with great competence all the activities of the Kāśī-pīṭha including religious activities, had also created awareness regarding the importance of education, besides guiding the people of the Society to lead good and honourable lives. Interested as he was in performing without fail Liṁga-pūja thrice a day, he used to proceed to the banks of the Gaṁgā on a palanquin without fail and to take a dip in the holy river. Even as he was performing all these daily activities without fail, old age and illnesses began to overtake him and he began to think about arrangements for the future Headship of the Kāśī-pīṭha. In those days, in the Jagadguru Viśvārādhya

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Gurukula of Kāśī Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha, there were many students studying different śāstras. Among them was Śrī Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi who was then the head of the Hirē-maṭha of Tasgaon in Maharashtra and who was of very good character, very good looking as well as very learned. On 23.6.1912, the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha prepared his death deed and in that deed[9] (Will), he had not recorded all necessary details. To remedy this lacuna he prepared another death deed[10] (Will) in the name of his chosen successor from Tasgaon on 6.12.1919. Later on, after many days, at 11.30 a.m. on Friday, on the 12th day of the bright fortnight in the month of Māgha, in the Śaka year 1853 (19.2.1932), he anointed as his successor with all religious formalities Mallikārjuna Śivāchārya *alias* Śrī Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya of Hiremaṭha of Tasgaon, to whom he had earlier handed over his two death deeds. At the time of his anointment he was given the name of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya *alias* Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi. Having very successfully discharged his administrative and religious responsibilities as the Head of the Kāśīpīṭha for a long time and having thus tired himself through incessant hard work, the 82nd head of the Kāśīpīṭha merged with the Liṁga in his 67th year on Amāvāsyā in the month of Phālguṇa in the Śaka year 1853 (5.4.1932) which was

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a Tuesday. His *samādhi* has been built to the south-west of *Kailāsa-maṁṭapa.* On that *samādhi*, a Chaṁdramauḷīśvara-liṁga has been installed. As an integral part of this Liṁga are prominently seen the figures of the crescent moon and the descent of the Gaṁgā. For worshipping this unique and rare Chaṁdra-mauḷīśvara-liṁga, there is always a steady flow of devotees. During the festival occasion of Mahāśivarātri lakhs of devotees living in Kāśī come to this place throughout the day to have darshan of this Liṁga and thus to get themselves purified.

83rd Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi :

The 83rd head of the Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Jñānasiṁhāsana Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha was Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mallkkārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya *alias* Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi. Prior to his anointment as head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, he was at the Hirēmaṭha in the town of Tasgaon in Sangli District of Maharashtra. This Hirēmaṭha has an anointed head as well as itinerant heads. Being a subordinate branch of the Kāśī-pīṭha, this Hirēmaṭha has succession from father to son. There was a couple in that Hirēmaṭha, viz, Śrī Virūpākshasvāmi Jaṁgama and Smt. Śivaliṁgavva. To this Māhēśvara couple was born in the town of

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Mīraj their son called Appaiah on the sixth day of the bright fortnight of Bhādrapada in the Śaka year 1821 (15.7.1889) which was a Monday.

Chi. Appayya studied in Marāṭhi up to the 5th standard in the No.2 school of the Town Council of Tasgaon. By that time, the head of the Tasgaon Hirē-maṭha had merged with the Liṁga and, since that *Maṭha* was following the system of father-son succession, all the disciples of the *Maṭha* joined together and formally installed Chi. Appayya as its head in the year 1911. At the time of his installation, he was given the name of Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya.

Later, all the devotees of the town got together and sent the new head of the *Maṭha* to Kāśī-kshetra for studying Sanskrit. The then head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, who was the 82nd in the line of succession, permitted him to join the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha in the year 1911. At that time, Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya was a mere boy of 12 years and was very handsome to look at. He became a favourite of the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha who, as a result, paid great attention to his studies.

The young student, blessed by the guidance of the Jagadguru of Kāśī-pīṭha and with the cooperation of the learned teachers as also his classmates, studied such subjects as Sanskrit, literature and grammar. The 82nd Jagadguru of the Kāśīpīṭha was enchanted by the

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boy's attractive personality and his devotion to his studies and, therefore, the Mahāsannidhi gave him in confidence his death deed (Will) nominating him as his successor on 23.6.1912. On his part, Paṁchākshara Śivāchāryasvāmi, along with a good number of his friends, continued his studies with great enthusiasm. Whenever he had free time from his studies, he used to conduct with great devotion all the affairs of the Kāśī-pīṭha as ordered by his Guru, the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha. Paṁchākshara Śivāchāryasvāmi stayed in Kāśī-kshetra for 21 years from the year 1911 to the year 1932 and mastered all the *śāstras*. The 82nd Jagadguru had not only wished to make him his successor as head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, but had also handed over to him his death deed (Will).

The Installation Ceremony :

In accordance with his wish, the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha made Paṁchākshara Śivāchāryasvāmi sit on the Jñāna-pīṭha of the Kailāsa-maṁṭapa and anointed him by offering him the staff and the ascetic's water pot at 11.30 am on Friday the 12th day of the bright fortnight of Māgha in the Śaka year 1853 (19.2.1932). The installation ceremony was performed with all the formal religious customs and practices which were in vogue in the Kāśī-pīṭha. By doing this, the 82nd Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha conferred on his young successor all the authority due to the position of the Jagadguru. He

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also gave him on that occasion the official names of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya Śivāchārya *alias* Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi. This installation ceremony was attended by several scholars of Kāśī. The official chronicler of the Kāśī-pīṭha Śrī Rāmachaṁdraprasād also participated in the installation ceremony and discharged all his duties. Those who witnessed this instllation ceremony of Śrī Jagadguru Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi in the divine presence of his Guru were all highly pleased.

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CHAPTER VI

The Viśvārādhya Bank and its problems

Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Bank and the Decision of the High Court :

The 82nd Jagadguru, during his tenure as head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, had established 'Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Bank' and was also personally looking after its affairs and economic solvency. He used to give higher rates of interests to those who had deposited their money in that bank. Some people who had taken loans from the bank found it impossible to return the loan as well as the interest on it. As a result the work of recovery of loan money suffered and the bank began to gradually move towards bankruptcy even during the tenure of the 82nd Jagadguru himself and the deposits made by the depositors had begun to shrink. Because the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, during his lifetime, had successfully paid the interest to the depositors, as long as he was heading the *pīṭha*, nobody had realized that the bank was in a bad shape.

However, after the 82nd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha had merged with the Liṁga, the affairs of the bank were taken over by the new Jagadguru Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi. When it came to disbursing the interests on the depositor's money, the Jagadguru

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was surprised to find that there was not enough fund in the bank. The depositors also gradually began to realize that the money they had deposited in the bank was no longer available. At that time, 94 depositors of the bank initiated legal action against the Kāśī-maṭha in the Banaras Lower Court on 14.3.1932. Their complaint was registered as case no. 12/1932. In that complaint the depositors had prayed that the moveable and immoveable properties of the Ḳāśī-maṭha may be sold and their deposits along with the interests due on them may be returned to them.

After conducting an inquiry into the matter on 27.11.1933, the then Judge of the Lower Court Śrī Vindhyavāsini Prasad unhesitatingly accepted as genuine the grant deed given to the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha by the Ruler of Kāśī Jayanandadēva but he also ordered that some of the properties of the Maṭha should be auctioned and the money realized should be used for returning the depositors money. On hearing the Lower Court's decision, the 83rd Jagadguru of Kāśī-pīṭha Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi went on appeal against that judgement to the High Court of Allahabad on 19.2.1934 and his appeal was registered as no. 58/1934.

On this appeal, inquiries were held continuously for as long as 8 long years in the Allahabad High Court. On 6.2.1942, a Division Bench of the Allahabad High

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Court, consisting of the Hon'ble Chief Justice Sir Iqbal Ahmed and Justice S.K.Dhar, gave a historical judgement. In that judgement the appeal of the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha was allowed and the Justices upheld the antiquity of the Kāśī-maṭha, its ancient Vīraśaiva tradition and the authenticity of the grant deeds kept in the *Maṭha* and pronounced that, since the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha was an ancient religious institution, all the properties belonging to that *Maṭha* having been acquired through grant deeds, they should not be auctioned. But the court also stated that from the regular income of the *Maṭha*, after spending whatever money was needed to run the day-to-day affairs of the *Maṭha*, the remaining amount should be returned to the depositors of the Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Bank through the Court. For this purpose, they also appointed a Receiver.

The Recognition accorded by the High Court to the Grant Deeds of the Kāśīpīṭha :

In the history of the Kāśī-pīṭha, the period between 14.3.1932 and 6.2.1942 was one of extreme difficulties which tested the very essence of the *Pīṭha*. It was during this period that the huge burden of debt amounting to Rs. 1,86,000/- resulting from the mismanagement of the Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Bank fell all on a sudden like a huge boulder on the Kāśī-pīṭha creating doubts

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about its very existence. But, the 83rd Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha did not lose heart and, after obtaining the advise of expert solicitors, he himself went against the 94 complainants, in the very manner of Abhimanyu entering the *Chakravyūha* all alone and began to wage the legal battle against the plaintiffs.

His legal battle was fought continuously for 10 long years. During that battle, all the gift deeds preserved in the Kāśī-pīṭha served as safe shields and protected him. We have already stated above that in the Kāśī Mahāpīṭha all gift deeds including the one issued by the Kāśī king Jayanaṁdadēva in 574 A.D. and all the *firmans* issued by the Moghal Emperors, Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Shahajahan, Aurangazeb, Darashikoh and Muhammed Shah until 1668 A.D. are all preserved in their original form. When the above legal battle was going on the 83rd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha produced all these gift deeds before the Allahabad High Court stating that the Kāśī-pīṭha had not bought any piece of land with the money deposited in the bank. On the other hand, all the lands belonging to the Kāśī-pīṭha had all been granted by the Rulers and Emperors in the past. The Mahāsvāmi made it known to the High Court that the gift deeds were the direct evidence of the acquisition of landed property through gift deeds.

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The Two Judge Division Bench of the Allahabad High Court consisting of Hon'ble Sir Iqbal Ahmed and Hon'ble Sri S.K. Dhar, thoroughly examined all the grant deeds and influenced by their genuineness and by the antiquity of the Kāśī-pīṭha, pronounced their historical judgement on 6.2.1942 in favour of the Kāśī-pīṭha. It was this judgement which saved Kāśī-pīṭha from the danger of extinction[10]. The date on which this significant judgement was delivered deserved to be written in golden letters in the history of Kāśī-pīṭha. The entire credit for this Himalayan achievement should go to the 83rd Jagadguru of the Kāśī-pīṭha. Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya has thus become an unforgettable head of the Kāśīpīṭha.

All the previous heads of the Kāśī-pīṭha were great ascetics, had attained Śivayōga-siddhi and had worked for the welfare of the Society. Besides, many *āchāryās* of the *pīṭha* had entered into *samādhi* while still alive. These great religious traditions have served as a protective schield to the Kāśī-pīṭha. When we consider the fact that all the hindrances which the Kāśī-pīṭha had to face from time to time had been easily overcome, we get confirmed that this happy development was due to asceticism of these heads of the Kāśī-pīṭha.

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Debt Relief :

The favourable judgement of the Allahabad High Court had no doubt resulted in the melting down of the moutainous danger faced by the Kāśī-pīṭha. But the *Brahmarākshasa* in the form of a huge debt of Rs. 1,86,000/ was sitting pretty with its mouth wide open. However, the 83rd Jagadguru was not scared of this potential danger and, meditating on the merits of the previous *āchāryas*, adopted the following method. Spending as little of the regular incomes as were earned from the rents collected from the houses and shops belonging to the *pīṭha* and the lease money coming to the *maṭha* from its leased fields, he saved much of the incoming money and went on paying that amount through the Court to the Receiver Śrī Tandon.

Decision on the Successor :

All these court affairs which had been going on from 1932 had placed a great strain on the mind of the Jagadguru. This had resulted in an adverse effect on the Jagadguru's physical as well as mental health. In course of time, he began to experience the transient nature of human existence. The 83rd Mahāsannidhi thought that Śrī Vīrabhadra-śarmā who had been a student of the Viśvārādhya Gurukula of Kāśī-pīṭha and had acquired great scholarship and had by then earned

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great fame and name in Karnataka and Maharashtra will be the best choice as his successor. At that time, Śrī Vīrabhadra-śarmā had left Kāśī and had been teaching in the Gurukula established by him in Secunderabad. Having realized the versatile personality of Śrī Vīrabhadra-śarmā, the 83rd Mahāsannidhi, towards the end of his life, wrote down his death deed (Will) on 20.4.1944 proclaiming as his successor Śrī Vīrabhadra-śarmā and merged with the Liṁga on 26.4.1944. His *samādhi* has also been built in the Harēśvara-maṁdira.

This 83rd Head of the Kāśī-pīṭha was born in 1899 and in his 12th year had gone over to Kāśī-kshetra for higher Sanskrit studies. By his excellent character, he became a favourite of the 82nd Jagadguru from whom he obtained the authority of Jagadguru of Kāśī-pīṭha on 19.2.1932. In the next 12 years, during which period he served as the head of the *pīṭha*, he achieved many great things in protecting the interests of the *pīṭha* and in his 44th year, he merged with the Liṁga on 26.4.1944. His tenure as head of the *pīṭha* marks an important period in the history of Kāśī-pīṭha.

84th Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Vīrabhadra Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi II :

Prior to taking over as the 84th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, he belonged to the Chidare-maṭha in the

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small village called Charalapalli in the Nalgonda district of Andhra Pradesh. His Māhēśvara parents were Śrī Nāgabhūshaṇa śāstri and Smt. Śyāmalāṁbā Dēvi. He was born at 11.45 a.m. on the full moon day of Śrāvaṇa in the Śaka year 1826 (25.8.1904). He was eventually given the name of Gurayya.

The Chidare-maṭha of Charalapalli has a great tradition of scholarship. Among the religious lineage of this Maṭha mention may be made of the following prominent persons: Śrī Śivaleṁkayya, Śrī Prāṇaliṁgayya, Śrī Gaṁgādharayya and Śrī Nāgabhūshaṇa Śāstri who were all great Vēdic Paṁḍits. In this great traditional lineage was born Śrī Gurayya also known as Vīrabhadrayya.

Śrī Vīrabhadrayya completed his 7th standard studies in Telugu in his native village of Charalapalli and in Nalgonda. In keeping with the adage 'study is only one quarter and intelligence is three quarters', Vīrabhadrayya began to compose poems even when he was a student of the primary school. He had thus earned the title of *bālakavi* even in his childhood days. When he was only 13 years old, both his parents merged with the Liṁga.

Thus, even as his primary education was coming to a completion, he became an orphan. Since he had no means for continuing his studies, he gave up the

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very idea of acquiring further educational qualifications and instead became a teacher in a primary school. He served in this capacity for one year. Since he had an unquenchable thirst for higher education he resigned his teacher's job in 1919 and proceeded to Hyderabad in search of higher education.

In the Sanskrit *Pāṭhaśālā* at Hyderabad, he secured admission and besides studying *Amarakōsha, Śabdarūpāvaḷi* and elementary astrology, he also studied the languages of Telugu and Urdu. Later, with the desire of acquiring even deeper knowledge in Sanskrit, he joined the Sanskrit *Pāṭhaśālā* run by Śrī Siddhaliṁgasvāmi of Nīraḍaguṁba and Rāmagaḍḍe in Andhra Pradesh. He studied advanced Sanskrit in that *Pāṭhaśālā* from 1920 to 1922. Afterwards, he got himself admitted to the Chōḷēndra Saṁskṛita *Pāṭhaśālā* of Nārāyaṇapēṭe in Nizamabad district in 1922. There also, he spent 3 years till 1925 and studied *Raghuvaṁśa, Kumārasaṁbhava, Kirātārjunīya, Śiśupālavadha* and *Naishadhīya,* the five great Sanskrit *Mahākāvyas* and also studied Sanskrit dramas.

Side by side, he also developed the art of speaking eloquently and with power in Telugu, Kannada and Sanskrit. Through the efforts of Śrī Śāṁtavīrasvāmi of Gurumaṭhkal-maṭha, the first Andhra Vīraśaiva conference was organized in the village of Iṭagi in the kingdom of the Nizam in 1924. Not only were Śrī Mṛityuṁjayasvāmi

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of Murughāmaṭha of Dharwar and Hardēkar Manjappanavar were present at the conference but the conference was also presided over by the Advocate of the Hyderabad High Court Venerable Śrī Bāpūrao Deshmukh. Along with many other scholars Śrī Vīrabhadrayya also got a chance to make a speech in the conference.

He delivered in Telugu an eloquent and powerful speech on the antiquity and greatness of Vīraśaiva dharma. Listening to this spirited speech by a youth of tender age Śrī Bāpūrao Deshmukh was greatly influenced and the highly impressed audience presented him with an amount as a sign of encouragement. In fact, in that meeting, Śrī Vīrabhadrayya got an award of Rs. 80/-. Śrī Bāpūrao Deshmukh made enquiries about the antecedents of this boy and having come to know that he was an orphan, he made a public announcement in the conference saying that he will meet all expenses if he chooses go to Kāśī for higher education.

Proceeding to Kāśī for Higher Education :

Having accepted the generous offer of Śrī Bāpūrao Deshmukh, Chidarē-maṭha Vīrabhadra-śarmāji was extremely happy and made preparations for his higher studies in Kāśī-kshetra. At that very time, the case about the Paraḷī *Rudrābhishēka* had begun in the city

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of Hyderabad. There was a great commotion in the matter of whether the Vīraśaivas had the right to study the Vēdas. Having come to know of this controversy Śrī Vīrabhadra-śarmā took a vow to make a study of the Vēdas in Kāśī-kshetra. Later on, obtaining a letter of recommendation from Gājalu Tōṭayyagāru of Nalgonda, who was a famous bangle merchant, he proceeded to Kāśī-kshetra. Having obtained the permission of the then head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, he joined the Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Gurukula on 13.12.1925.

Having studied continuously for 5 long years the Vēdic texts as a student of the Vēdic scholar of Kāśī-kshetra *Paṁḍita* Yōgēśvara Pāṭhak, he passed the *Vēdatīrtha* examination conducted by the Bengal Sanskrit Association of Calcutta in 1930. The very first person to pass this *Vēdatīrtha* examination among the Vīraśaivas was a certain Virūpāksha Woḍeyar of Chauḍadānapura. Thus Śrī Vīrabhadra became only the 2nd person to achieve this credit.

Leadership of the Paraḷī Mahārudrābhishēka event :

In the same year (1930), the Paraḷī case in the Hyderabad Court resulted in the decision that the Vīraśaivas had the right to study the Vēdas. In order to celebrate this victory over a period of 11 days from 12.5.1930 to

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22.5.1930 the *Mahārudrābhishēka*, the *aḍḍapallaki* festival of Sri Jagadguru of Kāśī-pīṭha and a great religious convention were all organized by the Vīraśaiva Mahārudrābhishēka Committee of Paraḷī. For this festival of victory, *Vēdatīrtha Paṁḍita* Virūpākshasvāmi Woḍeyar and śrī Śaṁbhuliṁga Śivāchāryasvāmi of Vijāpura had been invited.

For the same festival, *Paṁḍita* Chidare-maṭha Śrī Vīrabhadra-śarmā, who had just then obtained the Vēdatīrtha certificate, was also invited. In the divine presence of the Kāśī Mahāsannidhi, in the religious conference held on 15.5.1930, 16.5.1930 and 21.5.1930, Śrī Vīrabhadra-śarmā delivered powerful and erudite speeches respectively on "the duties of the youth", "the primary responsibility of the Vīraśaivas" and "Vīraśaiva-dharma" and earned the admiration and appreciation of all those present.

Multifaceted Scholarship :

Paṁ. Śrī Vīrabhadra-śarmā made uninterrupted studies of various subjects for 10 to 11 years from 1925 to 1935 in Kāśī-kshetra and had obtained the 'Vēdatīrtha Certificate' in 1930, 'Kāvyatīrtha Certificate' in 1931, 'Smṛititīrtha Certificate' in 1934, 'Sarvadarśanatīrtha Certificate' in 1935 and had obtained deep knowledge in different subjects. Besides, he had also obtained the

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certificates of *'Sāhitya Viśārada'* and *'Dharmāchārya'* from Mathurāvraja Maṁḍala.

Having taken note of his scholarship in different subjects, the "Saṁskṛita Sāhitya Samāja" of Kāśī, in its X Annual Congregation under the Presidentship of *Mahāmahōpādhyāya Paṁ.* Mukunda Jha conferred on Śrī Vīrabhadra-śarmā the title of "Vidyāratna" on 2.3.1935. In the same year, the 83rd Head of the Kāśī-maṭha conferred on Śrī Vīrabhadra-śarmā the title of 'Vidhyānidhi' on behalf of Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Jñānasiṁhāsana. Because *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā was a great intellectual, he had acquired command over Sanskrit, Prākṛit, Pāli, Telugu, Kannada, Hindi and Marāṭhi languages besides acquiring a fairly good knowledge of the Urdu, Bengali, Tamil and English languages. In his eagerness to help the Society and awaken them, he engaged himself in the constructive work of writing articles, making speeches and writing books.

Archaeological Scholarship :

Śrī Vīrabhadra-śarmā of Chidare-maṭha was not only an accomplished polylinguist but was also an expert on different scripts. Having acquired competence in deciphering 40 types of ancient scripts of our country as an epigraphist, he had also earned a good name in the field of Archaeology. He had successfully deciphered

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the ancient script used for engraving an inscription on the "Śakti-staṁbha" of Uttarakāśī and had written critical notes on it in the Hindi journal "*Purātatvāṁka*" published from Bihār. Not only had Indian Historians praised the scholarship of *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā in epigraphy, but even the members of the Royal Asiatic Society of England had appereciated his knowledge. It must be pointed out that until he had successfully deciphered that Uttarakāśī inscription in 1933, no one else had been able to make out the proper import of that inscription.

Being well versed in epigraphical knowledge, he wrote an article on the "Ammaṇagi Copperplate inscription" of Vijayāditya. This learned article has been published in "*Bhāratīya Anuśīlana*" a Felicitation volume presented to the great historian *Mahāmahōpādhyāya* Rao Bahaddūr *Paṁ.* Gowrishankar Hirachand Ojha in Vikrama Saṁvat 1991 (1934 A.D.).

Organizing Dexterity :

Along with his studentship, *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā had devoted equal attention to the strength of unity. He, therefore, got together Svāmīs of various traditions, Śāstrīs and Artisans who had come from different regions in 1934 and, taking initiative in his hands, established the Kāśī Vīraśaiva Vidwat Saṁgha. That organization is actively conducting its programmes to this date.

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Establishment of Vīraśaiva Gurukula :

After completing his studies at Kāśī in 1935 when *Paṁ.* Chidare-maṭha Vīrabhadra-śarmā decided to go back to his native state of Andhra Pradesh, the then 83rd Mahāsannidhi bade him farewell after conferring on him the title of 'Vidhyānidhi'. After his return to Andhra Pradesh from Kāśī, *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā was invited by the Committee of Śaṁkara Sanskrit College at Yādagiri in 1935 and he was appointed as a Professor there. He taught in that college for one year. At that time, a certain Nagayya of a *Maṭha* in Secunderabad gave him one of his houses and requested him to start a Gurukula in that very building. Acceding to that request, *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā established one Vīraśaiva Gurukula in the month of September 1936 and also took upon himself the responsibilities of a teacher and the lodging and boarding of the students of that Gurukula.

He also established in that building a Library called 'Śaiva Bhārati'. He preserved in that Library the invaluable collection of palmleaf manuscripts and printed books which he had collected during his studentship. Thousands of books in all languages and on all subjects were collected and preserved in that library. It was considered as one of the important libraries in the State of the Nizam. The people of that region came to the

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conclusion that the person who could make such a huge collection in his individual capacity cannot be an ordinary man.

Having realized that books and magazines played an important role in propagating religious ethics from house to house, he started publishing a Telugu monthly called "Vibhūti". He also began to work as the editor of that magazine. His editorial writings, book reviews and the articles he had written from time to time on social ethics consisting of moral preachings serve even to this day as very useful contributions. Dr. K. Pratap, Sanskrit Professor in the Tirupati University has made a complete collection of his writings in one place. This collection of Paṁ. Vīrabhadra-śarmā's writings runs into more than 1000 pages. The present head of the Kāśī-pīṭha Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Dr. Chandraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi, having realized the usefulness of these writings, published in 2007 in book form Dr. Pratap's collection of *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā's writings as a publication of the Śaiva Bhārati Śōdha Pratishṭhāna of Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha.

Accession to the Kāśī-Jñānasiṁhāsana :

We have already mentioned that *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā of Chidare-maṭha had spent 10 years from 1935 to 1944 as teacher in the Vīraśaiva Gurukula at

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Secunderabad and also as the editor of the magazine 'Vibhūti' and that he had also served as Adviser to the organization of various religious activities, thus gaining the admiration of Vīraśaivas of Andhra. Even as his fame had begun to spread all over Andhra Pradesh, the 83rd Head of the *Pīṭha* who had earlier decided to declare Śrī Vīrabhadra as his successor had fallen ill and, accordingly, in order to fulfill his earlier desire, he wrote his death-deed (Will) on 20. 4. 1944 offering the headship of the Kāśī-pīṭha to Vīrabhadra-śarmā and finally merged with the Liṁga on 26. 4. 1944.

After having come to know that the 83rd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha had written his death-deed and had offered the successorship to him, *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā went to the Kāśī-pīṭha on 3.5.1944. He then performed the sacred *ārādhanā* of the deceased Mahāsvāmi in strict accordance with religious rules on 8.5.1944. Later, on 20. 5. 1944, *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā returned to Secunderabad, packed up all the manuscripts and books which he had collected in his Gurukula there and collecting all his private belongings, he returned to Kāśī-kshetra on 10. 8. 1944.

At that time, because of the great financial crisis which had hit the Kāśī-pīṭha, the free boarding arrangement for the students of the Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Gurukula had been discontinued. On coming to know

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of this, *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā, taking courage in his hands, restored the practice of free boarding in the Gurukula from 14. 8. 1944, bringing great happiness to all the students studying there.

Thus, *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā brought under his control all the affairs of the Kāśī-pīṭha and began to set right all the shortcomings thereat. Moreover, he started making arrangements for his own installation as the head of the *pīṭha.* He decided that he should get himself installed as the *pīṭha* head from the hands of the then head of the Raṁbhāpuri-pīṭha who had earlier studied in the Gurukula of the Kāśī-pīṭha. Accordingly, he invited the Raṁbhāpuri Jagadguru with all necessary formalities and requested him travel to Kāśī-kshetra. The revered Raṁbhāpuri-mahāsannidhi accepted the invitation from *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā and went to Kāśī with the entire retinue of his followers. On the way to Kāśī, he halted at different places in Karnataka, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, in all of which places, he gave his *darśan* to his devotees and finally reached Kāśī-pīṭha on 22.9.1944. On the arrival of the Raṁbhāpuri-mahāsvāmi in Kāśī-pīṭha, *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā, along with a number of other heads of *maṭhas,* worshipped the Mahāsannidhi with holy water for washing his feet, hands and for drinking, garlanded him and took him inside the Kāśī-pīṭha with great respect and devotion.

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For the ascension ceremony of *Paṁ.* Vīrabhadra-śarmā on the Kāśī-pīṭha, celebrated from the 22nd to the 27th of September 1944, more than ten thousand devotees had come to the Kāśī-kshetra from all regions. For all these devotees, lodging arrangements had been made in the spacious building of the Kāśī-pīṭha, in the Sanātana Dharma High School, in the Rāmāpura Dharmaśālā, Raya Bhahaddūr Bhavan, Jaṁbū Boarding, Daśāśvamēdha Post Office and in the Sākshī Vināyaka Temple. During those days, wherever one turned his sight, he saw only Vīraśaivas in Kāśī.

On 27.9.1944 which was the day of *Vijayadaśamī* in the bright half of Āśvina month in the cyclic year Tāraṇa of the Śaka year 1866 which was a Wednesday, in the Brāhmī-mahūrta, in the vicinity of the *samādhi* of Viśvārādhya in the *Kailāsa-maṁṭapa, Paṁḍits* Guruliṁga-śāstri, Gaṁgādhara-śāstri, Naṁjuṁḍārādhya-śāstri and other priests began to perform, in strict accordance with religious rules, Vēdic rites such as *puṇyāha-vāchana, nāṁdī- samārādhana, dēvatā-maṁṭapa-pūje, aṁkurārpaṇa,* etc. The students of the Association of Vīraśaiva school of Kāśī and Vīraśaiva *sumaṁgalīs* who had come to Kāśī from different parts of the country carried to that spot silver pots containing Gaṁgā-tīrtha accommpanied by the playing of sacred musical instruments.

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Everywhere in the Kāśī-pīṭha, one could hear only the chanting of the Vēdic hymns. In such a holy atmosphere, at the right moment of sanctity, the Raṁbhāpuri-mahāsannidhi was brought to the *Kailāsa-maṁṭapa*. The *Kailāsa-maṁṭapa* of the Kāśī-pīṭha had at that time looked exactly like *Kailāsa*. The Raṁbhāpuri Jagadguru made *Paṁ*. Vīrabhadra-śarmā sit on the Jñāna-pīṭha and with his holy hands anointed him with the water of the Gaṁgā, gold and the nine *rasas*. At that moment, the *vaidikas* chanted Śrī Rudra in its traditional form. When, thus, all the formalities of anointment had been completed, as had been already decided, at 1.30 p.m. in *Dhanur-lagna*, Śrī Raṁbhāpuri-sannidhi enthroned *Paṁ*. Vīrabhadra-śarmā as head of the Kāśī-pīṭha by placing on his head the golden crown studded with precious stones and gave him the names of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya *alias* Śrī Jagadguru Vīrabhadra Śivāchārya-mahāsvāmi(II). At that time, all the devotees who had gathered there spontaneously raised victory slogans hailing the new head of the Kāśī-pīṭha as well as the Raṁbhāpuri Jagadguru.

Later, both the Jagadgurus had the *darśan* of the *samādhi* of Viśvārādhya and then, seated in the Chitra-bhavana, gave audience to the devotees and blessed them. In the evening at 7'O clock, in the field in the front of the Durbar Hall of the Kāśī-pīṭha, the

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Dharmasabhā was inaugurated. This *sabhā* was attended by the itinerant heads and *Dēśika-mūrtis* from Hubballi, Beṁgaḷūru, Hoṭagi, Parāṇḍa, Jamakhaṁḍi, Bīḷagi, Hūli, Jaināpura, Kōḷe, Mānūru, Navalagumda, Maḷali, Jīvargi, Girisāgara, Shiggāvi, Sūḍi, Rowḍakumdi, Rāyachūru, Muḷḷūru, Marava, Kaḍakoḷa, Aḷavaṇḍi, Byāhaṭṭi, Bichakumda, Kyāsaṁpēṭa, Sollāpura, Vairāga, Jat, Umarāvati, Nāgapura, Nāsika and Koṭṭūru. In the same manner prominent Vīraśaivas, Śeṭṭars, Dēsāis, Advocates and countless devotees from Beṁgaḷūru, Dāvaṇagere, Shivamogga, Chitradurga, Bīrūru, Hāsana, Tarīkeṟe, Gadaga, Bijāpura, Koṭṭūru, Baḷḷāry, Gulabarga, Hyderābāda, Secundarābāda, Bejavāḍa, Gaṁjāma, Viśākhapaṭṭaṇaṁ, Rāmanātha, Bīḍa, Lātūra, Bārśi, Paṁḍharapura, Nāgapura, Khāṁgaoṁ, Puṇe, Mumbai, etc., and from all the other cities and towns of Southern India were present at the *sabhā*. In that *sabhā* programmes such as speeches by the scholars, religious discourses by the Śivāchāryās and finally the speeches of blessings by the two Jagadgurus went on till 11'O clock at night.

Next day, i.e., on 28.9.1944, at 10.00 a.m., the palanquin procession of the new Kāśī Jagadguru was taken through all the main streets of Kāśī with great festivity and pomp. That very evening another *dharmasabhā* was conducted. Many eminent personalities

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who could not attend the installation ceremony had sent their messages. When we consider the fact that no less than 450 such messages had been received from all over the country, we can easily realize the great popularity and influence enjoyed by the newly installed Kāśī Jagadguru. The Kannaḍa messages were read out by the Head of the Bīḷagī-maṭha while the Telugu messages were read out by Śrī Baṇḍāru Liṁgamūrti. The High Court Advocate Śivarudrappa of Bīrūru read out the Felicitation letter in Hindi and presented it to the new Jagadguru. The message sent by the Jagadguru of Śrīśaila was also read out at the *sabhā*. *Tarkatīrtha* Nīlakaṁṭha Śivāchārya of Hūli, Rudramuni Śivāchārya of Anagōḍu, Bāmaṇa Gaonkar of Umarāvati, Vāchaspati Guṁḍērāya the District Judge of Gadwāl, Rudrārādhya of Beṁgalūru, Siddhārāma Śivāchārya of Rowḍakuṁdi and Marisōmārādhya of Beṁgaḷūru had all sent their messages in Sanskrit. Apart from this, Chief Justice Mahādēvaiah, Bābāsāhēb Vārada of Sollāpura, Nāgappakāḍādi also of Sollāpura, *Paṁ.* Rāmāchārya, the High Court Advocate of Hyderabad, High Court Advocate Janārdana Dēsāi, Vīraśaiva Taruṇa Saṁgha of Koppaḷa, Vīra-māhēśvara Saṁgha of Gadugu, Prabhurāva Vakīla of Udagīr, Vaijanātha sēṭ of Mōmināabad and the Secretaries of the Jaṁgama Saṁgha of Rājamundry had all sent their telegraphic messages in English.

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So also, Māsti Veṁkaṭēśa Iyeṁgār, *Paṁ.* Śivarudra-śāstri of Tumkur, Saraf Basappanavar of Beṁgaḷūru, Koṭṭūrēśvara Śāstri of Kummūru, Muragēṁdra Śivāchārya of Koṇṇūru and Dānagowḍa Pāṭīla of Niḍasōsi and others had sent their messages in Kannaḍa. In the *Dharmasabhā* of that day Dr. Naṁjappa of Mysore, Siddharāmappa Chappaḷagi of Sollāpura, Nāgappaṇṇa Afzalpurkar of Sollāpura, Smt. Gaṁgavvabāyi Maḍaki of Sollāpura, Smt. Bhāgiratī Bai of Kaṭap, Rāchaliṁga Śivāchārya Paraṁḍakar, Chennavīra Śivāchārya of Koṭagi and Annadānayya, the editor of the magazine called '*sanmārga darśaka*' of Dāvaṇagere, spoke on the Vīraśaiva faith, *shaṭsthala-siddhānta*, the tradition of the Kāśī-pīṭha and the personality of their newly installed Kāśī Jagadguru.

Finally, the Raṁbhāpuri Jagadguru in his majestic and authoritative voice began his speech in Sanskrit and at the end gave his words of blessings in Kannaḍa. He said in the course of his speech – "To-day is the Banni festival of Vijayadaśami. It is a matter of great privilege that this installation ceremony of the head of the Kāśī-pīṭha has taken place on this great day. Therefore, it appears to me that the Kāśī-pīṭha had brought to this place devotees from all parts of the country, saying banni ! banni ! (means come ! come ! in Kannada), we will give you holy knowledge. We have been unwell

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for the last 2 months, but without caring for it we have come to Kāśī-pīṭha from the Raṁbhāpuri-pīṭha after a month long journey, because we have studied for 10 to 12 years in the divine presence of Jagadguru Viśvārādhya and have gained much knowledge. It is through the blessings of Jagadguru Viśvārādhya that we had become the head of the Raṁbhāpuri-pīṭha and have to-day earned so much respect and honour. Therefore, we consider that we are obliged to the Kāśī-pīṭha. We cannot free outselves from this debt, whatever we may do. Yet, we have come here with the hope that we will be able to repay at least a small portion of that debt".

"We are not the only head of the Raṁbhāpuri-pīṭha to have come here as a student, but even the Svāmīs of Chitradurga, Hubballi and Koppaḷa had also come here and completed their studies in the Kāśī-pīṭha. After their studies, they are adorning very high positions. The present Jagadguru of the Kāśī-pīṭha has also acquired great scholarship by studying in this very Kāśī-pīṭha. He had refused initially to accept the headship of this *pīṭha*. We had to make him accept by issuing a very strict order and, hence, he has come here. Many people had impressed upon us that we should not change the name of the new Jagadguru. I found good reason behind such a request. Earlier to this, one Vīrabhadra

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Jagadguru had become the head of this *pīṭha* with the same name of Vīrabhadra. To-day we feel, as if that same Vīrabhadra has come back and, listening to the inner voice of our's, we have decided that we don't have the right to change the new Jagadguru's name and therefore, we have given him the same *Paṭṭanāma* of Vīrabhadra. The new sannidhi is a treasure house of all round knowledge. Nobody who does not have the special qualities of Śrī Viśvārādhya can become the Head of this *pīṭha*. The learned Śrī Sannidhi has ascended this *pīṭha* only because he has in himself a part of the greatness of Śrī Viśvārādhya. During his period, the Vīraśaiva community will attain great success and this Gurukula will flourish".

Finally, the newly anointed Kāśī Jagadguru began his speech by chanting the holy hymns from *Sāmavēda* and delivered his blessing-speech in the five languages of Sanskrit, Hindi, Kannaḍa, Telugu and Marāṭhi. In a steady voice, the newly installed Jagadguru based his blessing-speech on *Vīraśaiva sṛishṭi*, *Prākṛita sṛishṭi*, *Jñāna-karma-samuchchaya*, the duties of a Guru towards society and such other subjects. "Because of the confluence of three rivers, Prayāga is hailed as *Triveṇī Saṁgama*; but to-day in the Kāśī-pīṭha devotees from regions where five different languages are spoken have gathered here and, therefore, to-day the Kāśī-pīṭha has become

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'Paṁchavēṇī Saṁgama' This *pīṭha* is a very ancient one. Even as ignorance had hidden *Parabrahma-tatva* so also the greatness of this *pīṭha* had been for some time hidden by a number of difficulties. Just as the ignorance that had hidden *Brahmā* was removed so also our Guru Śrī Jagadguru Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya-mahāsannidhi had cleared, through his incessant efforts, all the difficulties that had befallen the Kāśī-pīṭha. Thus the continued existence of the Kāśī-pīṭha has been ensured. Our predecessor had placed great faith in us and had blessed us with this weighty responsibility of heading this *pīṭha*. We will try to fulfill our responsibilities successfully through his blessings. Devotees should not lightheartedly make accusations against the *Svāmis* and simply keep quite. If those who have released themselves from the family bondage decide to extend their cooperation to the heads of *Maṭhas* in various villages and towns, we believe that enough religious as well as social activities could be promoted by each of these *maṭhas*. Therefore, devotees should get interested in offering their cooperation to the heads of the *Maṭhas* instead of merely indulging in accusations". This was the gist of the benediction delivered by the newly installed head of the Kāśī-pīṭha to the audience present at the *sabhā*. Thus ended successfully the elaborate accession ceremony of the new Kāśī Jagadguru. All

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the devotees who had come to Kāśī to attend this function were given free food. All the Heads of the *Maṭhas*, scholars and those who had rendered services with physical, mental and financial help were all honoured by the Kāśī-pīṭha.

Felicitation of the newly installed Jagaduguru by the Scholars of Kāśī :

A meeting of the scholars had been arranged in the divine presence of the newly anointed head of the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha on 6.10.1974. *Paṁ.* Bhūrināṭha Pāṭhak, *Paṁ.* Chinnasvāmi-śāstri, *Paṁ.* Baladēva Upādhyāya, *Paṁ.* Yāgēśvara Pāṭhak, *Paṁ.* Rajanīkāṁta Bhaṭṭāchārya, *Paṁ.* Rāmachandra Dīkshit, *Paṁ.* Paṭṭābhirāma-śāstri, *Paṁ.* Mūlaśaṁkara Vyāsa, *Paṁ.* Tārācharaṇa Bhaṭṭāchārya, *Paṁ.* Nārāyaṇa-śāstri Khiste, *Paṁ.* Raghunātha-Śarmā, *Paṁ.* Gaṇapati-śāstri Mokāṭe, *Paṁ.* Bāḷakṛishṇa Pañchōli, *Paṁ.* Viṁdhyēśvarīprasāda-śāstri, *Paṁ.* Śivamaṁgaḷa Trivēdi and many other scholars of Kāśī, numbering 54 in all, had participated in that meeting.

In the deliberations which followed scholarly debates on grammar, literature, logic, poetics, and philosophy were conducted. Then, the Śrī-Sannidhi was presented with a Felicitation letter in Sanskrit signed by all the scholars who were present at the meeting. After honouring all the scholars on behalf of the Kāśī-pīṭha Śrī-Sannidhi delivered his benedictory speech.

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Establishment of a Library in the Temple of Learning:

The 84th Jagadguru of Kāśī-pīṭha was not only a highly educated Mahāsvāmi but was also interested in research and in gaining mastery over a number of scripts. Because of that he planned to establish a research centre in the Kāśī Jñāna-siṁhāsana Mahāpīṭha and in order to achieve this goal, he undertook the work of constructing a building for the library. When he became the head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, he had brought with him all the books which he had collected as a student and had now brought all of them them back to Kāśī-kshetra and decided to house all those works safely in the newly constructed library building.

When he took over the headship of the Kāśī-pīṭha it had been suffering from heavy financial deficiencies. In spite of that, taking courage in his hands, he performed the foundation ceremony for the new library building on 19. 8. 1945. Within six months, the ground floor of the library building was ready and was inaugurated on the auspicious occasion of Mahāśivarātri on 2. 3. 1946.

He prepared a budget of 3 lakh rupees for the entire construction of the library, the research centre and a printing press. Out of this, he planned to collect at least one lakh rupees to be partly contributed by the Kāśī-pīṭha and to be partly collected from donors. For

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this, the Mahāsannidhi had prepared the necessary ground work. He also printed and distributed handouts from the Kāśī-pīṭha saying that the names of those who donated Rs. 1,008/-, Rs. 508/-, Rs. 208/-, Rs. 151/-, Rs.111/- and Rs. 108/- according to their financial capacities will be engraved on the walls of the Library. On the invitation of the Mahāsannidhi a number of devotees favourably reacted and made donations to the Kāśī-pīṭha. Among those who gave such donations, mention may be made of Virūpākshagowda Maṭamāri and Siddayyanavaru, Kūḍalamaṭha of Śiggali, who each donated Rs. 1008/- ; Gaṁde Śivaśaṁkarappa of Narāyaṇapēṭe, Rao Bahāddūr Śivasiddappa Saranāyaka of Halagali, Siddhārāmappa Bijjaragi, Koṭrappa of Nandihaḷḷi in Hirehaḍagali and others gave each of them Rs. 508/- ; A.M. Śivaliṁgārādhya of Kittūru, Muddamallappa Sāhukāra of Vikārābad gave Rs. 208/- each. In the same manner a number of devotees cooperated with the Mahāsannidhi in fulfilling the task of knowledge dissemination by making grants to the library fund.

Within a course of one year, the first floor of the library was also completed and all the books which he had brought from Secunderabad were arranged in order and he gave the name of "Jñāna-mandira" to the library. In this library, more than 10,000 printed books and more than 1000 palm-leaf manuscripts have been collected and preserved. Dr. V. Śivānanda, Head of the

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Department of Kannada in the Banaras Hindu University had prepared a catalogue of all the handwritten manuscripts of this library with critical notes and had also got them published. The staff of the Oriental Research Institute of the University of Mysore had microfilmed for their study a number of important palm-leaf manuscripts preserved in this library.

Auspicious Beginning of Śivadharma Literary Series :

In the Kāśī Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha there had already been established a publication series in the name of Śivatattva Granthaṃālā. The 84th Jagadguru the Reverend Vīrabhadra-mahāsvāmi rechristened the same Śivatattva Granthamālā as Śivadharma Granthamālā and brought out many publications in that series. The Jagadguru had also prepared an ambitious project for compiling an encyclopaedia of Vīraśaivism. Besides, he also made a decision to bring out a voluminous felicitation volume containing articles on 108 subjects and entitled 'Vīraśaiva Vijñāna' in honour of *Paṁ.* Kāśīnātha Śāstry, the head of the Bṛihanmaṭha of Nāganūru. Unfortunately, these two major projects were not taken up and completed during his life time. It is very necessary that these two projects are taken up and completed. It is hoped that in the coming days these projects will be revived and completed.

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CHAPTER VII

Financial recovery of the pīṭha

We have already stated that when the 84th Jagadguru assumed charge as the head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, there was a huge burden of a debt of Rs. 1,86,000/-. It was also pointed out earlier that the High Court of Allahabad had imposed a Receiver on the *maṭha* with the responsibility that he should, after allowing for all the daily expenses of the *maṭha*, collect the excess amount and deposit it with the court.

There were occasions when differences of opinion used to crop up between the Jagadguru and the Receiver in the financial matters of the *maṭha*. It is but natural that when there are two administrative heads in the same institute there will be such conflicts. Therefore, the Jagadguru made an appeal to the High Court to the effect that he should himself be appointed as the Receiver by the Court, so that he can himself collect the excess amount and remit it to the court without any reason for conflict. The High Court acceded to his request and appointed Śrī Vīrabhadra Jagadguru himself to the post of Receivership. With this development, the Jagadguru prepared a plan for clearing the Kāśī-pīṭha of its debt-burden and obtained from some eminent persons interest-free loans and from others donations meant for clearing

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the debts and thus he began to reduce the debt-burden at a rapid speed. In obtaining interest-free loans, Śrī Jagadguru Vīrabhadra-mahāsannidhi had the cooperation of the head of the Raṁbhāpuri-maṭha, Śrī Afzalpurkar of Sollāpura, Gaṁdī Channabasappa of Narāyaṇapēṭe, Gaṁdī Siddappa and Kṛishṇappa, the head of the Hirē-maṭha of Navalguṁda, Asphalli Vīrabhadrappa of Saidāpura, Kuṁkalaguṁṭa Kōṭaiah of Dēvarapalli and Śrī Mallikārjunappa Gaṁbhīra of Sollāpura. Many other devotees had also given their donations for the relief of the debt standing in the name of the Kāśī-pīṭha.

Through these means, Śrī Vīrabhadra Jagadguru collected money from the income of the Kāśī-maṭha as well as through different sources and successfully relieved the Kāśī-maṭha of its entire responsibility of clearing the loans of the bank. In addition, he also made improvements in the running of the Gurukula and alms -house of Śrī Kāśī-pīṭha.

The Annual Gurudakshiṇā Project on Mahāśivarātri:

The 84th Jagadguru of the Kāśī-pīṭha had taken charge of that *pīṭha* at a time of great crisis. Whatever good he wanted to do was hindered by lack of funds. Every year, on the occasion of Mahāśivarātri the celeberation of the birthday of Jagadguru Viśvārādhya

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entailed a chariot festival, collective Ishṭaliṁga worship and the feeding of the devotees who would gather at the *pīṭha* and this required a lot of money to be spent. The *pīṭha* was unable to meet this huge expenditure and, therefore, the Reverend Sannidhi instituted a fund called "Mahāśivarātri Vārshika Gurudakshiṇā Yōjane". He explained to the pilgrims who visited Kāśī, the purpose of this project and got an assurance from them that they will offer *Gurukāṇikā* according to each devotee's financial capacity. Those devotees who had thus given their word used to sent by Money Order every year their *Gurukāṇikā*. With the help of the amounts sent by these devotees, the Sannidhi used to perform the *abhishēka* of Viśvanātha and Viśvārādhya and also used to send through post the *prasāda* to those donors.

Because of this project, not only the expenses for celebrating Mahāśivarātri were met but at the same time the devotees also got the Śivarātri *prasāda* of the Kāśī-pīṭha at their door steps. The promise made in those days by the devotees to send Rs. 5, 10, 25, 50 and 101 is being kept up to this day by their descendants. In this manner, the 84th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha who was born in a small village called Charlapalli in Andhra Pradesh in a poor *Māhēśvara* family fought against heavy odds and in course of time became a good student and finally achieved very great heights in

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scholarship and became the head of the Kāśī-Jñāna-pīṭha. Overcoming many of the difficulties which were faced by the Kāśī-pīṭha the Jagadguru ultimately succeeded in freeing it from all burdens of debt. In a short span of only 3 years 3 months and 29 days during which he was head of the Jñāna-pīṭha he had built the great facility called *Jñāna-mandira* and had registered achievements which could not be done even in the course of a hundred years. Later, in his 44th year, when he began to suffer natural ailments, the Jagadguru selected as his successor and gave his Will on 7. 1. 1948 to the student of the Kāśī-pīṭha Śrī Jayaguru Śivāchārya who had come from the Hirēmaṭha of Kyāsanūru in Soraba Taluq, Shimoga District. When his illness became more and more severe he ultimately merged with the Liṁga in the evening at 7. 20 p.m. on the 14th day of the bright fortnight of Paushya on 25. 1. 1948. Until he breathed his last, he was active in implementing acts of welfare and made his life an example for others to follow. The *saṁādhi* enshrining his mortal coils is located in the Harēśvara-mandira.

85th Sri 1008 Jagadguru Viśvēśvara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi :

Prior to being installed as the 85th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, he belonged to Madaga Māsūru in Hirekerur

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Taluq, Dharward District. Because a *śaraṇe* called Madagada Keṁchamma had lived in that very same village and had attained salvation by sacrificing herself the village came to be known as Madaga Māsūru. This also happens to be the birth place of the famous *anubhāvī* poet Sarvajña of Karnataka. Located in such a famous historical place the Hirēmaṭha of Māsūru had also by its noble traditions become a centre of devotion to the devotees of the neighbouring villages. The head of this *maṭha* Paramēśvarayya used to perform unfailingly Liṁga-pūjā and he was also of very religious disposition. He married Sow. Rudramma, the elder daughter of Vīrappayya of Keṁḍaḍa-maṭha of the village Siḍēnūr in Byāḍagi taluq of Hāvēri district. To this *Māhēśvara* couple were born six male children whom they named as Gaṁgādharayya, Nīlakaṁṭhayya, Siddhaliṁgayya, Basavarājayya, Mṛityuṁjaya and Śivamūrttayya. They also had three daughters named Basavaṇṇemma, Mahādevamma and Mahānandamma. They thus had the fortune of being the parents of 9 issues. Among them, it was Siddhaliṁgayya who, at a future date, became the head of the Kāśī-pīṭha and gained great fame as Jagadguru Viśvēśvara Śivāchārya.

Chi. Siddhaliṁgayya was born at the auspicious moment of Sunrise on Monday the 12th day of the dark fortnight of Phālguṇa in the cyclic year Anala in the

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Śaka year 1838 (20.3.1917). Because, at the time of his birth, the village of Madaga-māsūru was affected with Plague, the pregnant Rudramma went to the house of her close relatives in Kabbiṇakaṁti-maṭha in Raṭṭehaḷḷi. She gave birth to the child in Raṭṭehaḷḷi. On the 12th day the child was given the name of Siddhaliṁgayya. At that time, Śrī Siddhaliṁga Śivāchārya was the head of the Kabbiṇakaṁti-maṭha and the welfare of the child was being looked after under his guidance. Chi. Siddhaliṁgayya studied Kannada in Raṭṭehaḷḷi up to the 4th standard. Then for his Sanskrit education, the head of the Kabbiṇakaṁti-maṭha sent the boy to the village of Kaḍēnaṁdihaḷḷi in Śikārīpur taluq of Shimoga district. The Hōḷī-Haṁpēśvara-maṭha of Kaḍēnaṁdihaḷḷi is a branch of the Raṁbhāpuri-maṭha and its heads follow the system of father to son succession. At that time the great scholar of Kāśī, *Paṁ.* Gurumūrti-śāstri had started a Saṁskṛita-pāṭhaśālā in that *maṭha* and was himself teaching the students. Chi. Siddhaliṁgayya began to study Sanskrit under this great teacher and soon earned his appreciation.

During the next 8 years, Siddhaliṁgayya studied in that *pāṭhaśālā* and obtained great mastery over Sanskrit by studying the great works as *Amarakōśa, Śabdarūpāvali, Samāsachakra, Raghuvaṁśa, Kumārasaṁbhava,* etc. At that time, the Hirēmaṭha,

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which was a branch of Śrīśaila-pīṭha and was located in the village Kyāsanūru in Shimoga district, was without a head. The villagers met Parameśvarayya and requested him to permit them to select Chi. Siddhaliṁgayya as the head of the Kyāsanūru-maṭha. After intimate consultations with *Paṁ.* Gurumūrti-śāstri, Paramēśvarayya agreed to allow Chi. Siddhaliṁgayya as a bachelor boy to be the head of the Hirēmaṭha with great willingness. Because the Hirē-maṭha of Kyāsanūru followed the tradition of father-son succession, the members of this *maṭha* resented this arrangement. In the face of strong resistance from the members of the *maṭha* all the devotees of that village joined together and conducted the installation ceremony of Chi. Siddhaliṁgayya in the divine presence of Jagadguru Vāgīśa Paṁḍitārādhya Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi of Guṁtakal *maṭha* which was a branch of the Śrīśaila-maṭha in 1936. Chi. Siddhalingayya was given the new installation name of Jayaguru Vṛishabha Śivāchārya.

The members of the Kyāsanūru Hirēmaṭha on their part filed a suit in the court claiming that the installation of Chi. Siddhaliṁgayya at Guṁtakal was invalid. Because of that, the installation ceremony of the head of the Kyāsanūru *maṭha* became a subject of litigation in the court. In order to avoid any adverse effect on the mind of Jayaguru Vṛishabha Śivāchārya,

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he was sent away to the Sankrit Pāṭhaśālā of Śrī Vīraśaiva vāra of Sollāpura in 1937 for higher studies in Sanskrit. There he became the student of *Paṁ.* Jagadīśa-śāstri of Nālvār and began his advanced studies in Sanskrit.

The arguments made in the Taluq and District Courts resultled in a decision favourable to the Svāmi. But the members of the Kyāsanūru-maṭha went on appeal to the High Court and by that time Śrī Paramēśvarayya had become very indigent and also those devotees supporting the Svāmi all along began to gradually lose interest one by one. Thus without the support of devotees and in the absence of sufficient funds, the case of the Kyāsanūru-maṭha was decided in the High Court in favour of the members of the *maṭha.* This brought about great mental depression to the Jayagurusvāmi. On the one hand, he was not in a position to go back to his house and on the other the *maṭha* also had slipped out of his control. Thus a situation arose in which the Jayagurusvāmi found himself in a helpless situation.

It was at that time that the Palanquin Festival of Jagadguru Vāgīśa Paṁḍitārādhya Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi of Śrīśaila was planned to be celeberated at Kyāsanūru along with some religious rites. Jayaguru Vṛishabha Śivāchāryasvāmi went to Kyāsanūru and met the Śrīśaila

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Mahāsannidhi and informeld him about the goings on in the *maṭha*. On his part, Śrīśaila Mahāsannidhi advised him to forget about the controversial Kyāsanūru-maṭha and, since he was still a young man, advised him to go to Kāśī-kshetra for further studies. As per the Śrīśaila Sannidhi's orders though the Jayaguru wished to go to Kāśī, he lost his enthusiasm because he had no financial means. At that time, some 10 or 12 of his classmates who had studied with him at Sollāpura were preparing to go to Kāśī-kshetra. Among them, his close friend Śrī Saṁgamēśvara Śivāchāryasvāmi of Hirēmaṭha Jat Saṁsthāna invited the Jayaguru to go with him to Kāśī and offered to give him half of the amount which he was to receive from the Saṁsthāna-maṭha. This enabled the Jayaguru to go to Kāśī.

With the permission of the then 83rd head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, Jayagurusvāmi entered the Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Gurukula in 1943. But in 1944, the 83rd Jagadguru merged with the Liṁga and was succeeded by Vīrabhadra Jagadguru. The Jayaguru learnt the science of logic in the Govt. Sanskrit College from the Chief Professor *Paṁ*. Śivadatta Miśrā and also Sanskrit literature from the Chief Professor Śrī Tārācharaṇ Bhaṭṭāchārya of Ṭīkamaṇi Sanskrit College.

Even as he was studying in these institutions for 2 years, the then 84th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha fell ill and

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ultimately merged with the Liṁga on 25. 1. 1948 in Kāśī-kshetra. Even before he had shed his mortal coils, he had been attracted by the enchanting personality, studious nature and good character of Jayaguru Vṛishabha Śivāchāryasvāmi and had decided that, among all the students of the Kāśī-pīṭha, he was the most suitable to succeed him and wrote out his death-deed (Will) in his favour on 7. 1. 1948.

While the *samādhi* of the late Jagadguru was under construction Śrī Rāmachandra Prasād who was the then Manager of the Kāśī-pīṭha made public the late Jagadguru's Will and announced in the presence of all that Śrī Jayaguru Vṛishabha Śivāchārya will be the 85th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha. The students and the devotees who had collected at that time at the Kāśī-pīṭha welcomed the future head of the *pīṭha* by clapping their hands and by raising slogans in his praise. Subsequently, Śrī Jayaguru Vṛishabha Śivāchāryasvāmi assumed full charge of the affairs of Śrī Kāśī-pīṭha and continued all the traditional activities thereat. Later on, with the idea of performing his own installation ceremony on an auspicious occasion, Śrī Jayagurusvāmi invited to Kāśī the heads of the Raṁbhāpuri, Ujjaini and Śrīśaila *pīṭhas* by personally calling on those religious heads and inviting them with all proper formalities and also traveled all over the country and publicly announced the

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programmed event of his installation. At the same time, he also collected all the necessary articles required for the installation ceremony. It was then decided that he will be installed formally as head of the Kāśī-pīṭha between 9. 43 and 9. 57 a.m. on the 13th day of the bright fortnight of Kārttika, in the cyclic year Sarvvadhāri of Śaka 1870 (14.11.1948), which was a Sunday. That day was very auspicious, the *Lagna* being *Dhanus* which fell partly in Siṁhāṁśa. Accordingly, the coming event was propogatged all over through the dispatch of invitation letters.

Though all the remaining heads of the *Paṁcha-pīṭhas* had been invited for this occasion, the installation ceremony was attended only by the head of the Saddharma- siṁhāsana and the head of the Raṁbhāpuri Vīrasiṁhāsana. Thousands upon thousands of devotees from Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarpradesh had also come to Kāśī for witnessing the installation ceremony. In addition a number of Śivāchāryas and śāstris were also present from Hoṭagi-maṭha of Sōlāpura, Bīlagī, Rowḍakuṁdi, Śikhara-maṭha of Rayachūru, Kuṁdagōḷa, Maṇūru, etc. On 14.11.1948 at the auspicious moment noted above the 85th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha was formally anointed by the Raṁbhāpuri and Ujjaini Jagadgurus with all the ritual formalities of anointment, tying of the head band, placing of the

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crown on the head, handing over of official seal and the presentation of the religious staff and holy water pot. All these ceremonies were performed at the right time and the accession of the new *Sannidhi* on the holy *pīṭha* of Kāśī took place as per all the religious prescriptions. At that time, the 85th head of the *pīṭha* was given the names of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Mallikārjuna Viśvārādhya *alias* Viśvēvara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi in the midst of slogans of praise raised by the devotees.

Again at 6.00 p.m. in the evening, in order to conduct the religious assembly, the heads of the Rambhāpuri and Uajjaini *pīṭhas* as well as the new sannidhi were enthroned and the religious assembly was conducted with great festivity. On 15.11.1948 which was the 14th day of Kārttika, Monday in the morning at 10:00 am the new mahāsannidhi was taken on a palanquin through all the major roads of the city of Kāśī. In this grand procession all the thousands of visitors who had come from different parts of the country and different players of musical instruments as also a number of traditional *bhajana-mēḷās* wearing traditional dresses and ornaments had participated. The residents of Kāśī also had lined along the roads to witness the pleasing festival.

Right from the earliest time, the citizens of Kāśī had developed deep favourable attitude towards the

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Kāśī Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha. They come to see only once in a way such grand processions. Therefore, the devotees of Kāśī had cleaned the fronts of their houses with water all along the procession route and presented the new *sannidhi* with garlands and received from him fruits in the form of his blessings which increased their sense of fulfilment. This festive procession returned to the Kāśī-pīṭha at 5.00 p.m. and a great conference on awareness of religious ethics was held at 6.00 p.m. in the divine presence of the heads of the Raṁbhāpuri and Ujjaini *maṭhas* and the new head of the Kāśī-pīṭha.

In this conference, a number of scholars, poets and artists as well as Śivāchāryas exhibited their scholarship, art and eloquence. Also in this assembly the new *Mahā- sannidhi* of Kāśī-pīṭha conferred honours on eminent persons of the country, scholars and Śivāchāryās who had come thither. Finally, the *dharmasabhā* came to a conclusion with the blessing-speech of all the 3 *sannidhis.*

In that manner, thousands of devotees personally participated in the grand installation festivities with great enjoyment. And those who could not be personally present because of their preoccupations and inspite of their great desire to be present, sent their heartfelt messages and thereby felt satisfied. The prominent among such persons were *Paṁ.* Kāśīnātha-śāstri of Mysore,

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Śrī Channavīra Śivāchāryasvāmi of Sāviradēvara Saṁsthāna-maṭha of Bachchali, Justices P. I. Hirēmaṭha of Hubballi, Murigeppayya Siddappayya Kūḍalamaṭha of Śiggali, T. Siddaliṁgayya of Beṁgaḷūru, A.T. Hanumanthappa of Beṁgaḷūru, K.F. Pāṭīla of Byāḍigi, T. H. M. Chandraśēkhara Āchārya, B.A., B.L., of Bellary who was the owner of the magazine '*Navasaṁdēśa*', S.S. Māḷawāḍa, M.A. of Dharawada, Śrī Pha. Gu. Haḷakaṭṭi, B.A., LL.B., of Bijapura who was an Advocate and editor of '*Śivānubhava -patrike*', *Kīrtana Kēsari Kavibhūshaṇa* Śrī Śivarudra-śāstri of Gubbi, Major General Dewān Bahāddūr R.S. Hirēmaṭha of Kulābā, D. S. Gurubasappa, Asst. Suptd., Govt. Press, Mysore, M.V. Maruḷasiddayya, Agent, Burmah Shell from Shimoga, Advocate V.T. Kittūr, B.A., LL.B., of Belgam, Sadbhakta Maṁḍaḷi of Aḷavaṇḍi, Śrī Siddhaliṁga Śivāchāryasvāmi of Hirēmaṭha, Aḷavaṇḍi, Dr. Vīrayyadēva Śivānandāśrama of Rāyavaram, Āsthāna Vidvān B. Śivamūrti-śāstrigaḷu of Bangalore, who was the editor of "*Svatantra Karnāṭaka*", Śrī Shaḍakshari Hirēmaṭha of Bīḷagī who was the Head Master of the English High School at Hunagunda, *Paṁ.* Jagadīśa-śāstri of Nālavāra who was the Chief Professor in the Vīraśaiva Gurukula at Sōlāpura and many others.

After taking over as the 85th head of the Kāśi-pīṭha, the Mahāsannidhi served in that capacity for 41

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years from 14.11.1948 to 2.10.1989 and traveled extensively in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra and other regions and not only created awareness of religious ethics but also performed social and educational services and became the beloved of the people. We give hereunder some of the laudable achievements of the Mahāsannidhi.

When he took over as the 85th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, the burden of the bank's debt had been mostly wiped out though a little amount of debt had to be still cleared. The Mahāsannidhi's first act was to clear this remaining amount of debt and free the Kāśī-pīṭha from its commitment. Thus it so happened that the bank's loan burden had to be cleared in stages by 3 successive Jagadgurus of the Kāśī-pīṭha.

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CHAPTER VIII

Kāśī-pīṭha and the Tenanacy Act of 1956

Even as the clearance of this debt was creating an atmosphere of happiness, the Zamindāri Act which restricted the extent of land holdings came into force in Uttar Pradesh in 1956.

Resumption of the lands of the Kāśī-pīṭha by the farmers :

A number of Kings and Rulers had in the course of their tenures generously donated with great devotion, large extents of lands to the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha of Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Jñāna-siṁhāsana of Kāśī. On these lands in Kāśī, a number of open fields as well as thousands of built up houses were there in various localities called Jaṁgamavāḍi, Mānasa-sarōvara, Narmadēśvara, Doṁḍiyā Peer, Lakshmaṇapura (Gōdōlya), Sākshī Vināyaka, Hanumān Ghāṭak and Piyarī Mohalla.

So also in the district of Banaras there were thousands of acres of cultivable lands in the villages of Chhittāpura, Jaṁgamapura, Bhavānipura, Paṭṭilēśvara, Bhōlapura, Uddūpura, Mahwarkala, Mīrpūr, Bhaluvā, Chakkadhā, Chakkabhōjatayā and Khaṭarvā. For all these lands, the head of the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha was the actual owner and he was getting all these lands

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cultivated by employing farmers. This Zamindāri system was working perfectly until 1955. Later on when the Tenancy Act was passed in 1956, the rule that the lands belong to the cultivators came into force. Because of that thousands of acres of lands which were in the possession of the Kāśī-pīṭha came to be owned by the cultivators themselves. Thus the main source of income for the Kāśī-pīṭha was lost. This meant that just as the Kāśī-pīṭha had overcome one great difficulty it had to face the danger of another major problem.

But the 85th Jagadguru did not lose heart and began to march ahead with the confidence of facing this new handicap. Nevertheless, once the lands were lost to the Kāśī-pīṭha, the Mahāsvāmi and the *pīṭha* had to depend entirely upon the contributions made by the devotees.

Travels undertaken by Śrī-Sannidhi for propagating Religious Values :

The 85th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha during his tenure undertook extensive travels all over the country and scored many important achievements. The ascetic Maḍivāḷa Śivāchāryasvāmi of Hubbaḷḷi-12-Maṭha had established a Vīraśaiva-maṭha in Gōkarṇa-kshētra. He had invited the 85th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha to go to Gōkarṇa for inaugurating this *maṭha*. Accepting that

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invitation, the Kāśī Jagadguru went to Gōkarṇa on 1.3.1957. Not only was the Kāśī Jagadguru's Palanquin Festival celeberated there, but he also had the good fortune to perform the *Mahāpūjā* of his *Ishṭaliṁga* in the newly established *maṭha* at Gōkarṇa. Thousands of devotees were fortunate enough to participate in the *pūjā* activities of the Kāśī-sannidhi and witness the proceedings of the religious congregation that had been arranged on that occasion. The devotees also bore on their head the *pādukās* of the Kāśī Jagadguru and purified themselves by bathing in the sea.

Vīraśaiva Parishat held in the Maharashtra State :

The first Vīraśaiva Parishat of the state of Maharashtra was organized in the town of Amaravati in Maharashtra for 3 days from 28.12.1963 to 30.12.1963. The Vīraśaiva community of Amaravati had invited the Kāśī-Mahāsannidhi for this conference. *Samāja Bhūshaṇa* Gaṁgādharappa Chaudhari was elected President and Advocate Pasārkar was elected as the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Parishat. In the divine presence of the Jagadguru of Kāśī-pīṭha, the National Saint Śrī Tukaḍōjī Mahārāja inaugurated the programmes of the first day of the Parishat. That day's programme was presided over by the ascetic Paṁchākshari Śivāchārya. In the religious congregation of the Parishat which

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followed the auspicious procession of the Jagadguru of Kāśī-pīṭha, the head of the Vairāga, Sāgarakhēḍa delivered his religious message and Vēdantakēsari Mallikārjunasvāmi of Gadag delivered his spirited discourse. This occasion was graced by the presence of Śrī Rājaliṁga Śivāchārya of Paraṁḍakar-maṭha of Bārśi. On the second day of the Parishat, i.e., 29.12.1963 Śrī B. D. Jatti, the Finance Minister of the then Mysore State was present and guided the proceedings. He was honoured by the Kāśī-Mahāsannidhi. On 30.12.1963, the third and last day of the Parishat, a conference of the ladies was arranged. Smt. Paṁchamabāyi Sardar of Sōlāpura, Smt. Ratnābāyi Chaudhary of Paraḷī, Santa Śivagaṁgāmāyi of Puṇe and others actively participated in this programme and presented their views on many aspects. This ladies' conference was inaugurated by the Legislator and patriot Ratnappaṇṇa Kuṁbār.

On all these 3 days, after observing all the proceedings that had taken place, the head of the Kāśī-pīṭha presented at the end of each of the 3 days his spirited concluding speeches which were in the form of guidance and blessings. Some resolutions were passed for the betterment of the financial, educational and social conditions of the Vīraśaiva-samāja which was a minority community in Maharashtra. In order to make this Parishat a grand success, Śrī Mahārudra Nirvāṇa

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Rudra Paśupati Śivāchārya Kōḷēkar had brought with him in large numbers his disciples from all places.

The Installation of the Head of the Kēdāra-pīṭha :

After the head of the Kēdāra-pīṭha Rāval Viśvanātha Liṁga had attained salvation, it was decided on 14.5.1966 in the private consultative meeting of the Paṁchāchāryas in Śrīśaila-kshētra that the vacant Kēdāra-pīṭha should be filled by installing Śāṁtaliṁga Śivāchārya of the Hirē-maṭha of Mutanāḷ, who was a disciple of the late Jagadguru Nīlakaṁṭhaliṁga Śivāchārya of Kēdāra-pīṭha. The heads of the Raṁbhāpuri, Ujjaini and Śrīśaila *pīṭhas* who were present at that private consultative meeting decided to give the responsibility of crowning the head of the Kēdāra-pīṭha to the Kāśī Jagadguru Viśvēśvara Śivāchārya mahāsvāmi.

The Kāśī Jagadguru very ably handled the responsibility given to him by the other *Pīṭhāchāryas* of equal status and performed the installation ceremony of Śāṁtaliṁga Śivāchārya as head of the Kēdāra-pīṭha. At that time, he also gave him the name of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Rāval Śāṁtaliṁga Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi. For this ceremony, the Jagadguru of Raṁbhāpuri Maṭha was invited and he was made to place the crown on the head of the newly installed Jagadguru of Kēdāra-pīṭha.

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The Vēdic rituals and customs were performed by Śrī Channavīra Śivāchārya-svāmi at this installation ceremony.

Travel all over Maharashtra for propagating the Vīraśaiva Religion :

A committee under the Presidentship of Viśvaṁbharasvāmi Śiganāpurkar was formed with the idea of creating unity among the minority Vīraśaiva community of Maharashtra and to promote love and affection among them. In this committee Śrī Uddhava Māstara Jaṁgama also played an important role. These two together arranged for a journey of propagating the Vīraśaiva religion on a large scale in all the districts of Maharashtra by the 85th Jagadguru of Kāśī-pīṭha. This programme lasted uninterruptedly for 55 days from 15.12.1968 to 6.2.1969. Śrī Rēvaṇasiddha Śivāchāryasvāmi of the Paraṁḍakar-maṭha of Bārśi accompanied the Kāśī-mahāsannidhi during this entire programme. In this journey for propogating the Vīraśaiva faith in every town the Śrī Sannidhi used to arrive at 10.00 a.m. and from 11.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m., he spent his time taking bath, performing *pūja* and taking rest. Every afternoon from 2 to 3 p.m., the Jagadguru was taken in procession from his abode to the place of the religious assembly and between 3 and 4 p.m. the devotees had their *darśan* of the Jagadguru and devotional songs

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were sung. From 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. the religious assembly was conducted with religious messages delivered by the Śivāchārya and the blessing-speech by the Kāśī Jagadguru. Between 8 and 9.30 p.m. the Kāśī Jagadguru and Śivāchārya took their bath, performed their *pūjā* and had their food ; between 9.30 and 10.30 p.m. there were discussions with the local organizers about their problems and how to solve them. At 6 a.m. the next morning, the Jagadguru and the Śivāchārya began their journey to the next village. This was the way in which the daily programmes of the Mahāsannidhi's journey for religious propagation was arranged. Thus, when the head of the Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Jñānasiṁhāsana-pīṭha of Kāśī-kshetra himself visited his devotees from house to house during his religious journey covering 22 districts of Maharashtra, his followers were extremely impressed and felt blessed and because of this there was a great wave of devotion for the Jagadguru. As part of his desire to revive unity among Vīraśaivas, he invited the head of the Chitradurga Bṛihanmaṭha to participate in a grand palanquin festival at Bangalore on 7.1.1972 in which all the Paṁchāchāryas were to take part. Though he had originally accepted the invitation, the Svāmi of Chitradurga Bṛihanmaṭha did not attend this palanquin festival on the pretext of ill health.

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Among the many other acts of benevolence initiated by this great Jagadguru mention must be made of the establishment of students hostels, the resurrection of Dahivaḍakara-maṭha of Bārśi, the establishment of a Chair for Śakti Viśishṭādvaita studies in the Philosophy department of the Saṁpūrṇānaṁda Saṁskṛita University of Kāśī, the construction of a building for tradesmen in 1968 so that the income of the *maṭha* which had been steeply reduced by the Tenancy Act could be compensated and the unification of the the Vīraśaiva community of the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra by undertaking extensive tours in that region.

All the diaries recording the noble activities of this Jagadguru during his long tenure of 41 years are available in the Kāśī-pīṭha and have been safely preserved. It will indeed be worth bringing out a detailed history of the landmark period of this Jagadguru in book form giving full details of his activities.

At the end of his long tenure of 41 years when he was 72 years old, his health began to fail him. His illness took a turn for the worse in 1989 and he was admitted in the Jahangir Hospital of Puṇe for treatment. In spite of all the attempts of the doctors, his illness could not be cured. Finally on 2.10.1989, on the third day of the bright half of Āśvina, which was a Monday,

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the 85th Jagadguru merged with the Liṁga while staying in the Viśvārādhya Students Hostel in Puṇe.

His body was kept in that hostel itself for one day so that devotees could have a last view of the Jagadguru and pay their respects. Next day, his body was taken in a private aircraft to Kāśī. On hearing the news of his demise, the Raṁbhāpuri Jagadguru cancelled his Dasarā-durbar at Nelamaṁgala and immediately rushed to Kāśī on 4.10.1989.

His devotees reached Kāśī on hearing the news of his demise by all means of transport and finally on 5.10.1989, Thursday, in the evning at 6.00 p.m., in the august presence of Raṁbhāpuri ạnd Kēdāra Maṭh Jagadgurus and a number of Śivāchāṛyas and a huge gathering of devotees, the 85th Jagadguru Viśvēśvara Mahāsannidhi entered his *samādhi* with the performance of all religious formalities. Since this Jagadguru had attained salvation without naming a succęssor, the Raṁbhāpuri Jagadguru appointed Dr. Mahēśvaradēva, who was a student of the Viśvārādhya Gurukula, to discharge all duties of the Kāśī-maṭha in a temporary capacity until the permanent Jagadguru was be installed.

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CHAPTER IX

Dawn of the New Era

86th Srīmat-Kāśī Jñānasiṁhāsanādhīśvara Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi:

Prior to his installation as the 86th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, he belonged to the Purāṇa-maṭha of Tōguṇasi in Badami Tq., Bagalkot District which was a branch of the Raṁbhāpuri-pīṭha. The great vēdic scholar Virūpāksha-śāstri, belonging to this Purāṇa-maṭha, was a great scholar in literature. He had his education in the traditional school of Sanskrit at Sholāpur and later served as a teacher in the same institution. Besides, he had also served as a teacher in the traditional school in Babalēśvara, Kōṭekallu and Iḷakalla. The son of this scholarly Virupaksha śāstri was śrī Siddhaiah. To him and his wife Savaṁtramma was born on Thursday the 28th August, 1947 at 5.40 a.m. a male child who was named as Śēkharayya.

His birth had taken place in his mother's place in the Hirēmaṭha at Raḍḍēra Nāganūru. *Pam.* Kāśīnātha-śāstri of the Bṛihanmaṭha of Nāganūru was his mother's brother. Thus he was born in a traditionally well known family of scholars both from his paternal and

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maternal sides. It was, therefore, no surprise that he imbibed inspiration from both families and subsequently became the great Sanskrit scholar.

It may be pointed out that he was born on the 13th day after India had gained independence and India was in jubilant mood. He studied up to the 4th standard in his native place of Tōguṇasi and went to Byāḍagī town in 1957 where he studied up to the 8th standard. He then stayed for one year in the *maṭha* of Amarēśvara Śivāchāryasvāmi of Guḷēdaguḍḍa and completed his 9th standard in the Municipal High School. The *svāmi* of Amarēśvara-maṭha studied the palm of Śēkharayya and, in 1963, he accepted him through his will as his successor and also gave him the name of Chaṁdraśēkharayya.

Śrī Amarēśvara Śivāchārya svāmīji took Chaṁndraśēkharaiah, whom he had nominated as his successor through a Will, to Sollāpura and got him admitted in 1963 in the Vīraśaiva Saṁskṛita Pāṭhaśālā of Koṭagīmaṭha. The Chief Professor of that Gurukula *Paṁ.* Gaṁgādhara-śāstri admitted him as a student after giving him the name of Chaṁdraśēkhara-śarmā. Śrī Chaṁdraśēkhara-śarmā studied Sanskrit for 6 years in the Gurukula of Koṭagimaṭha and in the Vīraśaiva Saṁskrita Pāṭhaśāla and passed with distinction the Certificate courses of *'Kāvya Ādya'* (1965), *'Kāvya*

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Madhyama' (1967) and *'Kāvya tīrtha'* (1969) conducted by the Vaṁgīya Saṁskṛita Śikshā Parishat of Kolkata.

Even as he was completing his Sanskrit studies in Sollāpura, the head of the Amarēśvara-maṭha breathed his last at Hubbaḷḷi on Wednesday, 14.5.1969 because of ill-health in śrī M.F. Pāṭīl's house in Hubbaḷḷi. The last rites of the late Svāmi of Amarēśvara maṭha were conducted with all customary rituals at Guḷēdaguḍḍa under the supervision of Channamalla Śivāchārya of the Chikka-maṭha of Bannūru.

Subsequently all the devotees of the Amarēśvara-maṭha assembled under the leadership of Śrī M.F. Patil, collected necessary funds and on 1.6.1970 arranged for the anointment of Śrī Chaṁdraśēkhara-śarmā as the new head of the Amarēśvara-maṭha under the name of Śrī Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi with the blessing of the head of the Hanneraḍu-maṭha of Hubbaḷḷi who was a great ascetic.

With the help of his devotees Śrī Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi came to Kāśī-kshetra for higher studies. With the permission of śrī 1008 Jagadguru Viśvēśvara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi, the 85th Jagadguru of Kāśī-pīṭha, he obtained admission in the Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Gurukula on 16.7.1970. After studying for 3 years in the Philosophy Department of the Sanskrit University of Vāraṇāsi, he passed in 1973 the *Vēdāṁtāchārya*

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examination in First Class. He was also awarded 3 Gold Medals.

Besides, he won the First Prize in the elocution competition conducted at Guruvayur in Kerala in 1973 as a representative of Uttar Pradesh. He also won a Gold Medal when he passed the *Sarvadarśana-tīrtha* examination of Kolkata and obtained the First Rank in 1974. Later, as advised by the 85th Jagadguru he started his career as a Researcher.

He submitted a thesis entitled "Śrī Siddhāṁta-Śikhāmaṇi and the six *darśanas* – A Comparative Study', prepared under the guidance of *Paṁ.* Dēvasvarūp Miśra. After working on that subject for 6 years, he obtained in 1981, the degree of '*Vidyāvāridhi*' (Ph.D.) of the Saṁpūrṇānaṁda Saṁskṛita University.

For his Post Doctoral research, he worked on the subject "*Śakti Viśishṭādvaita Tattvatraya Vimarśaḥ* " and submitted it to the Saṁpūrṇānaṁda Saṁskṛita University and obtained the degree of '*Vāchaspati*' (D. Lit). One of his great achievements while he was in the Gurukula of Kāśī-pīṭha was the establishment of the Chair for Śakti Viśishṭādvaita studies. For the establishment of that Chair, the University had to be given an amount of Rs. One lakh. However, the *svāmi* could not mobilise such a huge amount but through pursuasive arguments with *Paṁ.* Dēvasvarūp Miśrā, the head of the Philosophy

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Department of that University, he managed to have the Chair established without making any payment. Pleased with this great achievement the 85th Jagadguru showered his blessings on Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi of Amarēśvara-maṭha. However, the University did not have any teacher to teach the subject of Śakti Viśishṭādvaita. Therefore, even while he was working for his D. Lit. degree, Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi took upon himself the responsibility of teaching Śakti Viśishṭādvaita in the Philosophy Department of that University. Besides establishing the Śakti Viśishṭādvaita Chair, Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi got in touch with the prominent citizens of society and also the heads of other *maṭhas* and arranged for stipends to be paid to the students so that they may take interest in the study of Śakti Viśishṭādvaita. In the midst of all these activities of being a research student and being, at the same time, a teacher, the Svāmi, whenever he could find time, visited regions in Karnataka and Maharashtra and gave lectures on Siddhāṁta-Śiḳhāmaṇi, the most valued philosophical treatise on the Vīraśaiva religion. When Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi was thus engaged in studying, teaching and lecturing on Vīraśaiva topics, he was delivering lectures in the Dēvī-maṁdira within the compound of the Agricultural Products Market in Sollāpura on the occasion of Navarātri in 1989. At

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that time news reached him that the 85th Jagadguru of the Kāśī-pīṭha was ill and undergoing treatment in a hospital in the city of Puṇe. From his hospital bed, the 85th Jagadguru wrote a letter to Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi to the effect that he wanted to discuss with him matters of importance and that, therefore, he should visit him at Puṇe on his way to Kāśī.

On receiving the letter, Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi abruptly concluded his Navarātri programme and decided to go to Puṇe. But, as fate would have it, on the 2nd day of the bright fortnight of Āśvina on 2.10.1989, the 85th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, after period of prolonged illness, merged with the Liṁga in the Jaṁgamavāḍi-maṭha of Sadāśivapēt in Puṇe. Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi heard of this tragic event over the Radio. Feeling sorry that he could not have the *darśan* of the 85th Jagadguru as desired by him, he rushed to Puṇe to have the last *darśan* of the deceased Jagadguru. But, by that time, the body of the late *sannidhi* has been taken to Kāśī through a private aircraft. The disappointed Śrī Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi rushed to Kāśī-kshetra in the hope of participating in the *samādhi* ceremony of the late 85th Jagadguru.

On coming to know of the demise of the 85th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, the Raṁbhāpuri Jagadguru

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cancelled his *Dasara-durbar* in Nelamaṁgala and immediately took a flight and arrived at Kāśī in the evening on 4.10.1989. On 5.10.1989, at 6.00 pm, in the presence of the Jagadguru of Kēdāra-pīṭha and a number of Śivāchāryas as well as a gathering of devotees, the Raṁbhāpuri Jagadguru performed the *samādhi* ceremony of the late 85th Jagadguru of Kāśī-pīṭha. Unfortunately, Śrī Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi could not reach Kāśī on time and by the time he reached that *kshētra*, the *samādhi* ceremony had already been completed.

As we have already stated, the 85th Jagadguru had not nominated any one as his successor. Therefore, the Jagadguru of the Raṁbhāpuri-maṭha gave the temporary charge of running the affairs of Kāśī-pīṭha to Mahēśvaradēva of Bādāmi. In a statement given by the 85th Jagadguru Śrī Viśvēśvara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi to the Income Tax department, he had stipulated three conditions for appointing his successor to the Kāśī-pīṭha : (1) The head of the Kāśī-pīṭha should nominate his successor during his life time or (2) The head of the Kāśī-pīṭha should write down his death deed or Will in favour of a candidate of his choice or (3) if neither of these has been done by the deceased head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, the remaining heads of the Raṁbhāpuri, Ujjaini, Kēdāra and Śrīśaila *pīṭhas* of the Vīraśaiva faith should meet together and decide upon the person

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who should be installed as the successor-head of the Kāśī-pīṭha. After coming to know of these three conditions, all the heads of the four *maṭhas* met on 14.11.1989 and, after prolonged deliberations over two days, unanimously decided on 16.11.1989 to anoint the head of the Amarēśvara-maṭha as the next head of the Kāśī-pīṭha. This decision was welcomed by everyone.

The installation ceremony of the 86th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha :

As per the decision taken on 16.11.1989, on the 5th day of the dark fortnight of Kārttika in the cyclic year Śukla in the Śaka year 1911, i.e., on 17.11.1989, Friday, after performing all necessary ceremonies the installation of Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmi as head of the Kāśī-pīṭha was consummated at an auspicious moment at 2.45 p.m. The ceremonies such as anointment, tying of the headband, placing of the crown, handing over the staff and the holy water pot and handing over the seal of the *maṭha* were all performed as per prescribed rituals in the presence of the heads of the Raṁbhāpuri-pīṭha, the Ujjaini- pīṭha, the Śrīśaila-pīṭha and the Kēdāra-pīṭha. At that time, the new head of the Kāśī Jñānasiṁhāsana was given the names of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Mallikārjuna Śivāchārya *alias* Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya

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Mahāsvāmi. The date of accession to the Kāśī-pīṭha of Jagadguru Dr. Chandraśēkhara Śivāchārya Svāmi heralded the golden era of the Kāśī-pīṭha and the Vīraśaiva faith.

For this happy event of the accession of the new head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, a number of eminent personalities from all over the country had congregated at Kāśī. All in all, the installation ceremony was conducted on a very grand scale. Among the scholars present at the time of the accession ceremony mention may be made of *Taporatnam* Yōgirājēndra Śivāchāryasvāmigaḷu of Sōlāpura, Śrī Prabhu Paṁḍitārādhya Śivāchāryasvāmigalu of Mājalgaon, Śrī Śrīpati Paṁḍitārādhya Śivāchāryasvāmigaḷu of Hirējēvargi, Śrī Shadakshara Śivāchāryasvāmigaḷu of Śirādhōṇa, Śrī Chandraśēkhara Śivāchāryasvāmigaḷu of Kalādagi, Śrī Vimala Rēṇukavīra Muktimuni Śivāchārya svāmigaḷu of Mukti Maṁdira, Śrī Rēvaṇasiddha svāmigapḷu of Paraṁḍakaramaṭha of Bārśī, Śrī Gurusiddha Śivāchārya svāmigaḷu of Dahīvaḍakara-maṭha, Bārśi, Dr. Jayasiddhēśvara Śivāchāryasvāmigaḷu of Gowḍagaon, Śrī Jayaśāṁtēśvara Śivāchāryasvāmigaḷu of Jālahaḷḷi, Śrī Guruliṅgaśivāchārya svāmigaḷu of Chitaguppa, Śrī Paṁḍitārādhya Śivāchārya of Vadaṁgaḷi, Śrī Paṁchākshara Śivāchārya Hirēmaṭha Vairāgya, Śrī Abhinava Śivaputrasvāmigaḷu of Bijāpura, Śrī Śivakumāramahāsvāmigaḷu of Bīdar, Śrī Śivānanda svāmigaḷu of Karjagi, Śrī Mahēśvaradēvaru of Badāmi,

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Śri T.G. Mallārādhya-śāstrigaḷu, Śrī Śivayōgiśarmā Hirēmaṭha, Śrī Chandrahāsareḍḍi of Karūr, Śrī G.C. Keṁḍadamaṭha, Dr. Pasārkar of Sōlāpura, Dr. Chandraśēkhara Kapāḷe of Gulbarga, Bābu Rava Vaiṁdara Gīkar of Sōlāpura, Śrī Vīraṇṇa Charantimaṭha, Chairman, Vīraśaiva Basavēśvara Vidyāvardhaka Saṁgha, Bāgalkōṭ, Śrī Sadāśivayyanavaru vastrada of Guḷēdaguḍḍa, Śrī Siddappa Tāṁḍūr of Guḷēdaguḍḍa, Śrī Yamanūrappa Aramani of Koṭakal, Śrī Basavarāja Dāsappa Gowḍara of Dharwar, Śrī Gurusiddha svāmigaḷu of Harihara, Śrī Damdaṇi Nārāyaṇa Rao, Advocate from Nāsik, Śrī Paṁchākshari Ligāḍe, Śrī Gaṁgādhara Chirame, Smt. Naḷini Chirame. Apart from the above eminent personalities, devotess had come in large numbers from Puṇe, Sōlāpur, Nanded, Nagpur, Nasik and from various cities in Maharashtra including Mumbai as well as devotees from Bagalkot, Guledagud, Bijapur, Dharwar and other centres of Karnataka.

Congregation of Scholars at Kāśī :

As part of the installation ceremony, the newly installed Mahāsannidhi arranged for an assembly of scholars at 3.00 p.m. on 20.11.1989 in the library called Jñāna- maṁdira. In that congregation, which was held in the divine presence of the new head of the Kāśī-pīṭha, a number of scholars from the Saṁpūrṇānaṁda

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Saṁskṛita University, many other Gurukulas and from Mahātmā Gandhi Kāśī Vidyāpīṭha, who were all scholars of great eminence and fame, participated. Among them mention must be made of *Paṁḍit* Dēvaswarūpa Miśra, the Head of the Vēdāṁta department, *Paṁḍit* Śāmanārāyaṇa Dīkshit, Prof. of Madhva Philosophy, Dr. Bhāgīrata Prasāda Tripāṭhi, Director, Anusandhāna Samsthā, Dr. Jugal Kishōr Miśra of the Vēdic Dept., *Paṁḍit* Vajravallabha Dvivēdi, former Teacher of the Yōga Tantra Section, Dr. Parasanātha Dvivēdi, Lecturer in the Philosophy Dept., Dr. Narēndranātha Puṇḍaya, Prof. in the Dept. of Rāmānuja Philosophy, Dr. Rājanātha Tripāṭhi, Prof. in the Āgama Dept., *Paṁḍit* Sudhākara Miśra of the Philosophy Dept., Svāmi Śivānanda, Philosophy Prof. in the Viśvanātha Gurukula, Dr. Nīlakaṇṭha Śarmā Hirēmaṭha, Principal of Braḥma Mahāvidyālaya, *Paṁḍit* Saṁgamanātha Śarmā Hirēmaṭha, Lecturer in Literature, Brahma Mahāvidyālaya, Janārdana Śāstri Pāṇḍēya, Research Assistant, Tibet Institute, *Paṁḍit* Rāmaprasāda Tripāṭhi, Retd. Prof. of the Dept. of Grammar, *Paṁḍit* Karṇāpati Tripāṭhi, former Vice-Chancellor, Saṁpūrṇānaṁda Saṁskṛita University, *Paṁḍit* Baṭukanātha śāstri Khiste, Head, Kāśī Paṁḍita Sabhā, Dr. Vinōdrao Pāṭhak, General Secretary, Kāśī Paṁḍit Sabhā, *Paṁḍit* Brhmānanda Chaturvēdi, Prof. in the Mīmāṁsa Dept., Śrī Rāma Pāṇḍeya, former Lecturer in

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the Dept. of Law and Dr. Śānta-śarmā Hirēmaṭha, Prof., Mahātma Gāndhi Kāśī Vidyāpīṭha. All the scholars were welcomed by the Administrator of the Kāśimaṭha Śrī Mahēśvara Dēvaru of Bādāmi; Paṁchākshari Ligāḍe applied the forehead mark to all the invities and garlanded them and they all participated in very scholarly debates. Finally, the new Jagadguru blessed all the participants, presented them with shawls and gifts. In that congregation the 86th head of the Kāśī-pīṭha was presented with a Felicitation Letter written in Sanskrit and signed by all the scholars who had participated in the proceedings.

Maṁḍalānushṭhāna a nd the Marāṭhi translation of 'Siddhāṁta Śikhāmaṇi'

The 86th Jagadguru, after assuming charge of the Kāśī-pīṭha, performed 48 days of religious practice. During that period, he made Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Kapāḷe of Gulbarga to sit with him and write a Marāṭhi commenatary on the famous Vīraśaiva work *Siddhāṁta Śikhāmaṇi.* In the year 1905 Vārada Mallappa got written for the first time a Marāṭhi commentary on this great work *Siddhāṁta Śikhāmaṇi* by Mallikārjuna Śāstri of Manūru and got the same published. Later, the revered Kāśi Jagadguru translated in Marāṭhi the original work and the Sanskrit commentary of Mari Tōṇṭadārya and prepared a new revised edition with the

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help of Dr. Chandraśēkhara Kapāḷe. In getting ready these monumental publications of Marāṭhi translation, the cooperation of Śaraṇayya Śāstri of Sollāpura and Dr. Paṭṭāraka deserves special mention. Thus the 86th Jagadguru brought out in print a new edition of *Siddhāṁta Śikhāmaṇi* with Sanskrit and Marāṭhi commentaries. This new edition was taken on an elephant in a procession in 1990, when the palanquin festival of the Jagadgurus of Śrī Kāśī-pīṭha and Raṁbhāpuri-pīṭha was celeberated. Thus we may consider that the Marāṭhi edition of *Siddhāṁta Śikhāmaṇi* was the direct result of the 48 days of religious practice observed by the 86th Jagadguru. Today this Marāṭhi edition is found in all the Vīraśaiva houses of Maharashtra.

The Religious Journey performed by the 86th Kāśī Jagadguru :

The 86th Jagadguru was invited to his native village of Guḷēdaguḍḍa where his first palanquin festival was celeberated by his devotees. Later, the 86th Jagadguru invited to Guḷēdaguḍḍa the heads of the Raṁbhāpuri, Ujjaini and Kēdāra *pīṭhas* and they were all honoured with *pūrṇa-kuṁbha* welcome and the palanquin festival. The fact that the first palanquin festival of the 86th Jagadguru was held in the original place where he had lived before his installation viz., Guḷēdaguḍḍa gave immense

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satisfaction to the people of that place. The next day, the palanquin festival was celebrated on a grand scale in the Jagadguru's birth place Tōguṇasi. The day after that, the palanquin festival of the 5 heads of the Vīraśaiva-pīṭhas, was celebrated with pomp and grandeur at Bagalakot. All these celebrations resulted in great happiness among the devotees.

Various Projects devoted to Social Welfare

From the day of his installation in 1989 till 2008, over a period of 18 years, the Jagadguru widely traveled in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and all over North India giving a new impetus to religious devotion and initiated a number of welfare measures and social activities and came to be greatly revered by the people.

Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Social Welfare Institute:

Śrī Jagadguru Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi founded on 28th August, 1993 a universal establishment called Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Social Welfare Institute. The main office of this institute is in the Kāśī Jaṁgamavāḍi Maṭha. But its jurisdiction covers the entire Indian sub-continent. This institute's many branches

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are located in different regions of the countlry. The details of these branches are as follows :

(1) **Śaivabhāratī Research Institute:**

This is one of the wings of the Jagadguru Social Welfare Institute mentioned above. Being a research institute, it has received the recognition of the National Saṅskrit Mission of New Delhi. Both male and female students who used to do research on ancient Śaivāgama texts are provided all facilities along with stipend for carrying on their research in this institute. The work of getting published all unpublished Śaivāgamas is one of the continuing activities of this institute. Even as it is, more than 50 such works have been published and have received the approbation of the academics.

(2) **Vīraśaiva Research Institute, Bengaḷūru :**

The Vīraśaiva Research Institute established in 1998 at Beṁgaḷūru, the capital city of Karnataka, has under taken serious research under the Headship of Dr. M. Śivakumārasvāmi and has published a number of Śaivāgamas with Kannaḍa translation. Under the auspices of this Institute, a seminar is conducted once a year on subjects related to Āgamas.

Already 8-9 seminars have been conducted by this institute in different places and have drawn the attention of scholars. The papers presented at these

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seminars have all been regularly brought out in print. The decennial celebrations of this institute were held on a grand scale from 01.01.2007 to 11.01.2007. During these celebrations, the 60th year of Jagadguru Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi was also celebrated.

(3) Śrī Jagadguru Paṁchāchārya Vēda-Āgama Saṁskṛita Yōga Pāṭhaśalā, Gadag :

This school was established in Gadag in the year 2000 as a branch of the above parent body called Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Social Welfare Institute of Kāśī-Pīṭha. Besides giving free food and residential accommodation to the students, they are taught Sanskrit, Astrology, Vēdic practices and Yōga. The faculty includes a number of experienced teachers of repute. There are about 40 to 50 students studying in this school, The construction of the building of this school has been completed at an expense of Rs. 30 to 35 lakhs. The school has received generous grants from donors from the neighbouring villages.

(4) Branch of Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Social Welfare Institute, Dharwar :

The Branch has been established on 14 acres of land donated by the devotees living in the areas of Narēṁdra and Maṅgaḷagaṭṭi. The Dharwar Branch of Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Janakalyāṇa Pratishṭhāna was

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established for imparting Vīraśaiva religious culture to adults and children. Under the leadership of the Head of this branch Dr. S.R. Rāmanagowḍara, a number of expansion programmes are on the anvil.

(5) **Bridegroom-Bride Welfare Centre, Sholapur.**

For over a decade now, the above Centre has been effectively functioning at Sholapur as a branch of the Viśvārādhya Social Welfare Institute mentioned above. As its Secretary, Sri Siddharāmappa Birājadāra has been performing his duties with dedication and a sense of service. The Bridegrooms and Brides of all sects of Vīraśaivas have been receiving excellent attention from this centre without any bias.

(6) **Śrī Viśvārādhya Educational Institute, Baluvā, Chandauli District :**

The above institute was established under the asuspices of Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Social Welfare Institute of Dharwar. On the western banks of the river Gaṅgā there exists the ancient sacrificial fire pit of Vālmīki. In the vicinity of that fire pit, the Kāśī-pīṭha owns four acres of land on which the institute has been built. At present this school conducts classes up to the 9th standard in HIndi medium. This has proved to be a boon to the poor children of the rural areas in and around Baluva

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(7) Special Scholarship Schemes :

Having seen a good number of intelligent children being deprived of higher education because of poverty, the Mahāsannidhi of Kāśī-pīṭha had instituted a scheme for students' scholarships during the last 8-10 years. Under this scheme poor and intelligent students studying in the Medical and Engineering colleges are being awarded a monthly stipend of Rs.1,000/- until they complete their education. As at present, 20 such students are enjoying the benefits of this scholarship. For the successful conduct of this scheme, a generous grant of Rs.10 lakhs has been made by Śrī Bābāsāheb Kalyāṇi and Smt. Suneeta Kalyāṇi on behalf of "the Akkūtāyi Kalyāṇi" Charitable Trust of the city of Puṇe. The Kāśī Jagadguru has been earmarking the entire offerings he receives from the devotees on the occasions of his birth day celebrations for augmenting this scholarship fund. That has amounted to Rs.15 lakhs thus far. Many Heads of Vīraśaiva Mutts as well as his devotees have decided to donate the offerings equal to the weight of the Jagadguru on the occasion of this 60th birth day and the Mahāsannidhi has decided to use that money for giving stiphends to 60 students

(8) Permanent Feeding House of Śrī Jagadguru Viśvēśvara Swāmiji :

The city of Kāśī is not only a centre of education but is also a holy pilgrimage centre. It is therefore not

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surprising that countless students and pilgrims as well of devotees continuously visit Kāśi either for their higher studies or for earning religious merits. With the noble intention of offering food on a continuous basis for all these students and pilgrims visiting Kāśī an alms house has been functioning right from early times in the Jaṁgamavāḍi Maṭha. After the attainment of salvation by Jagadguru Viśvēśvara Śivāchārya Mahāsannidhi, this alms house has been named in his memory. The functioning of this alms House having been further updated, one day's free food is being served to all those devotees who are desirous of utilizing this opportunity. If any devotee makes a permanent endowment of Rs. 11,108/- in the Kāśī pīṭha, from the annual interest amount accuring on that deposit, free food will be offered to the devotees on a date desired by the endower and a portion of the offerings to the god will be sent to him by post. As at present a number of devotees have created endowments under this scheme, thus effectively participating in the conduct of its programmes. Because of this all pilgrims visiting Kāśi and the students of the Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Gurukula are being offered free food twice a day without any break.

(9) **Śrī Jagadguru Viśvārādhya Viśvābhārati Award Scheme :**

This award is given to those who study the traditional Sanskrit language and render creditable service

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in the world of scholarship, to those scholars who make invaluable contributions either in Sanskrit or in any regional language to the Vīraśaiva philosophy. Learned women are also considered for this award. This scheme was started in 1997 and the award includes a cash prize of Rs. 25,000/- and a certificate, a shawl and a plaque to one selected scholar every year.

Those who have been honoured with this award includ *Paṁ.* Dēvaswaroopa Miśra, National Scholar Brajavallabha Dvivēdi, Dr. Paramahamsa Miśra, all from Kāśi, Dr. M. Shivakumara Swamy of Beṁgalooru, Dr. Chandraśēkhara Kapāle of Gulbarga, Dr. S.B. Pasarkar of Sholapur, Dr. K. Pratap of Tirupati, Dr. Maṭhari Liṁgayya of Hyderabad, Dr. Mallikarjuna Paraḍḍi of Dharwar, Prof. V. Venkatachalam of Tirunelveli in Tamilnadu and Prof. V. Kuṭuṁba Śāstri, Vice-Chancellor of Rāshṭrīya Samskṛita Saṁsthāna of New Delhi.

(10) **Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Kapāḷe Literary Award** :

This award is presented every year in memory of the famous Marāṭhi researcher Late Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Kapāḷe. This was instituted in the year 2002. The scholar selected for this award on the basis of his research on Vīraśaiva Literature in Marāṭhi is honoured with a cash award of Rs. 10,000/- along with a memento, a Certificate of merit, a shawl and fruits.

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With the noble intention that this award in memory of his late father may be made a permanent feature, his son Sri Abhay Kapāḷe had endowed at the Kāśī Pīṭha a sum of Rs. one lakh. The award is being given from the interest amount annually accruing on this endowment. Those who have been so far honoured with this award are *Paṁ.* Śāṁtitīrtha Swāmi Takur, Dr. U.M. Pathan of Aurangabad, Dr. Sudhākar Mogalewar of Nagpur and Dr. Nirmal Kumar Phaḍakule of Sholapur.

(11) **Śrī Vīrasaṁgayyasvāmi Best Teacher Award :**

This award is given in memory of Late Śrī Vīrasaṁgayyasvāmi who was a teacher in the Bōrāḷa village of Maṁgaḷavēḍa Taluq in Sholapur District. An endowment of Rs. one lakh has been created in the Kāśī- pīṭha for the granting of this memorial award by śrī Chaṁdraśēkhara Hirēmaṭha, a resident of Mumbai, in memory of his late lamented father. From the interest accruing on this endowment an award of Rs. 10,000/- in cash is given along with a memento, a Certificate of merit, a shawl and fruits to a selected teacher.

This award which began to be given from the year 2000 has been given for the first time to R.R. Magāyī of Sholapur.

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(12) Śrī Śivakamala Literary Award Scheme :

This scheme was instituted by Śrī Vāgīśaprasāda Śeṭṭi in memory of his parents Śivappaśeṭṭi and Kamalamma. Every year, this award is given to one Vīraśaiva scholar of Karnataka. The award includes Rs. 10,000/- in cash, a memento, a Certificate of merit, a shawl and fruits.

The award was instituted in the year 2004 and so far *Paṁ.* Mahādēvaiah of Bangalore, Sri N. Basavaradhya, Sri Shanmukhayya Akkūramaṭha and Dr. S. Vidyashankar have been the receipients.

(13) Establishment of the Vīraśaiva Āgama Chair in the Banaras Hindu University :

The study of Śakti Viśishṭādvaita Philosophy was begun in 1984 in the department of Philosophy of the Saṁpūrṇānaṁda Saṁskṛita University. Just as the Vēdas are indispensable in the study of Vīraśaiva Philosophy, the study of the Āgamas too enjoys equal importance. Therefore, the Kāśī Jagadguru Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi was planning to start the study of Vīraśaiva Philosophy based on *Āgamas* in the Benaras Hindu University. In the meanwhile in the Department of Saṁskṛita Vidyā Dharma Vijñāna a new branch for the study of *Dharmāgama* was started. The then Head of that Department, Dr. Kamalesh Jha was invited to

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the Jaṁgamavāḍi Maṭha by the Kāśī Jagadguru for an interaction. At the end of their discussions, Dr. Jha agreed to prescribe all Śivāgama publications brought out by the Kāśī Pīṭha as text books in his department. As a result of this development, the study of Vīraśaiva Āgamās was begun in that department in the year 2000. The system of conducting examinations in that subject having been started a number of students have been availing this facility. It is not an easy job to start a Chair for the study of any subject in an University. Yet, the 86th Kāśī Jagadguru, because of his personal equations, was successful in establishing the Vīraśaiva Āgama Chair in the Benaras Hindu University and has thus permanently hoisted the flag of Vīraśaiva philosophy in that University.

Thus ever since the illustrious 1008 Jagadguru Dr. Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmi, during the period of 18 years after he ascended the Pīṭha in 1989, has taken upon himself a number of schemes aimed at social welfare and has been successful in his noble goal. He has given a new lease of life to religious awakening through his lectures on *Siddhāṁta-Śikhāmaṇi* in Kannada, Marathi and Hindi in the states of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and in a number of places in North India. Besides, he was also responsible for the visit of lakhs of pilgrims to Kāśī in 1997 by

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performing 100 days of religious activities which included the offerings of one crore Bilva leaves to Lord Viśvēśvara. He also created a record in the history of the Kāśī-pīṭha in the year 2001 by performing *ati-Rudrābhishēka* and a festival of one crore lamps.

In order to celebrate, on a grand scale, the 60th year of the 86th Jagadguru of the Kāśī Pīṭha, a *Guruvaṁdanā* programme had been celebrated with great enthusiasm. These celebrations were conducted from 14.8.2007 to 29.11.2007 over a period of 108 days. On that sacred occasion, the Jagadguru got inaugurated through the holy hands of the other Heads of the Vīraśaiva Pīṭhas, the Jagadguru Paṁchākshara Bhaktanivāsa, Jagadguru Vīrabhadra Smṛiti Bhavana and the Jagadguru Vīśvēśvara Bhakta-nivāsa which he had got constructed with the help of the generous endowments made by his devotees.

As of now, excellent arrangmentls have been made in the Kāśī Pīṭha for proper lodging and boarding of the devotees who visit the Kāśī-pīṭha. Because of this, there is a steady stream of devotees visiting the *pīṭha*. Thus during these 18 years of the headship of Śrī 1008 Jagadguru Dr.Chaṁdraśēkhara Śivāchārya Mahāsvāmī, the Jaṁgamavāḍi-Maṭha of Kāśī Mahāpīṭha has taken a new glow of attraction. These happy developments are of course to be attributed to the blessings of all the previous heads of the Kāśī-pīṭha.

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79th Head of the Kashipeetha
Shri Jagadguru Hareshvara Shivacharya
(1825-1879)

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80th Head of the Kashipeetha
Shri Jagadguru Veerabhadra Shivacharya (I)
(1879-1889)

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81st Head of Kashipeetha

Shri Jagadguru Rajeshvara Shivacharya

(1889-1907)

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82nd Head of Kashipeetha
Shri Jagadguru Shivalinga Shivacharya
(1907-1932)

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83rd Head of Kashipeetha
Shri Jagadguru Panchakshara Shivacharya
(1932-1944)

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84th Head of Kashipeetha
Shri Veerabhadra Jagadguru
(1944-1948)

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85th Head of Kashipeetha
Shri Jagadguru Vishveshvara Shivacharya Mahasvami
(1948-1989)

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86th Head of Kashipeetha

Shri Jagadguru

Dr. Chandrashekhara Shivacharya Mahasvami

1989

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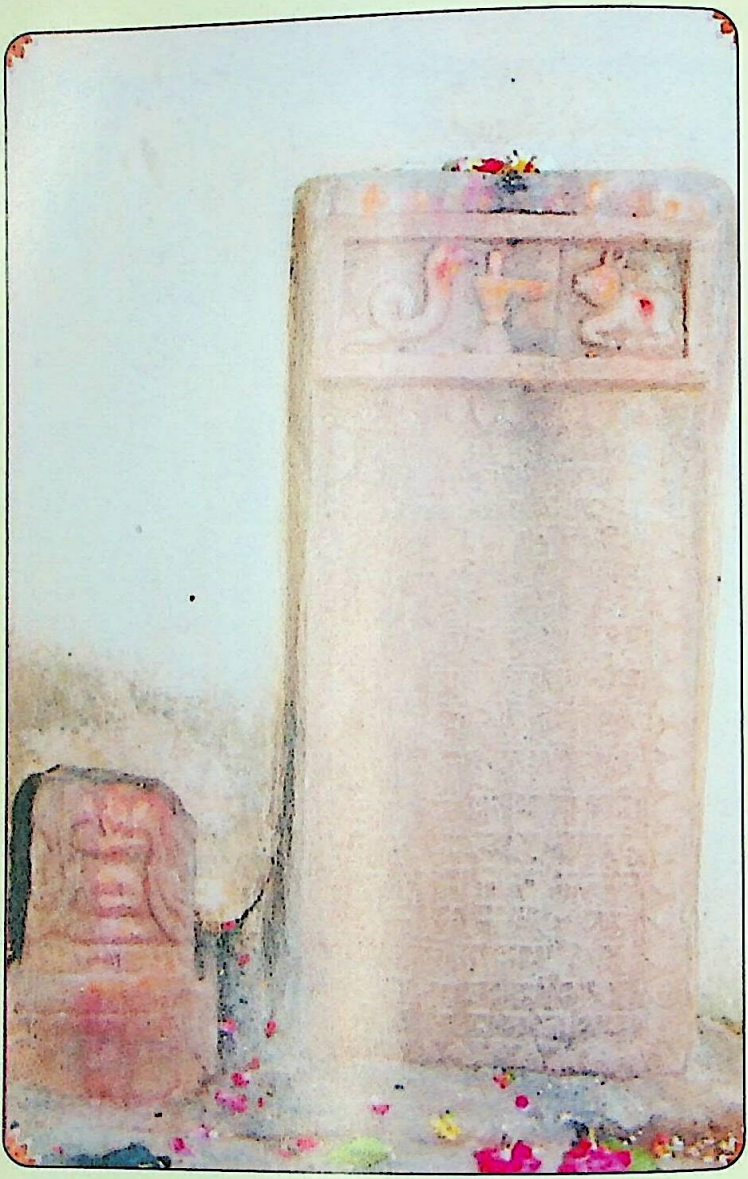

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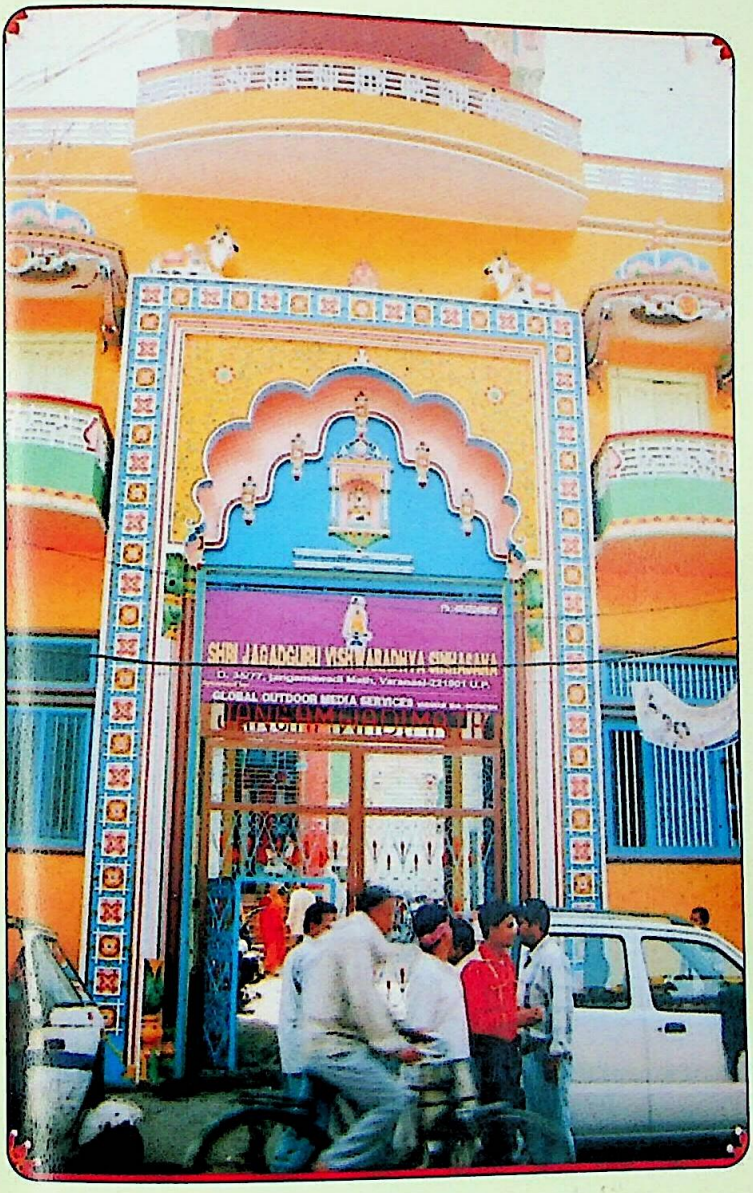

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Chandramoulishwara Linga, Jangamavadimath

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Shri Vishveshwar Linga inside Kashi Vishwanath Temple of Jangamavadimath

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Jnana Peetha at Kailasamantapa, Jangamavadimath

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Shiva Linga on Samadhi of Jangam Baba, Hyderabad Colony, Banaras Hindu University

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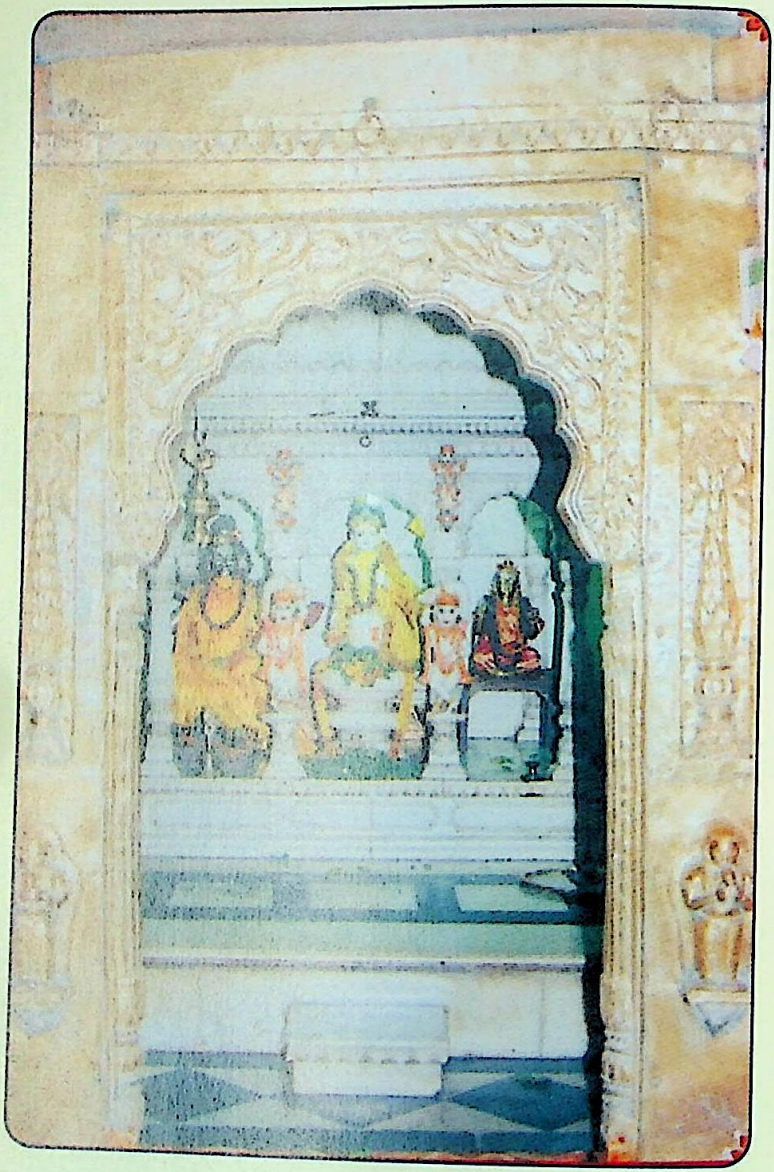

Shri Jagadguru Vishwaradhya Lingdobhava Moorti, Jangamawadimath

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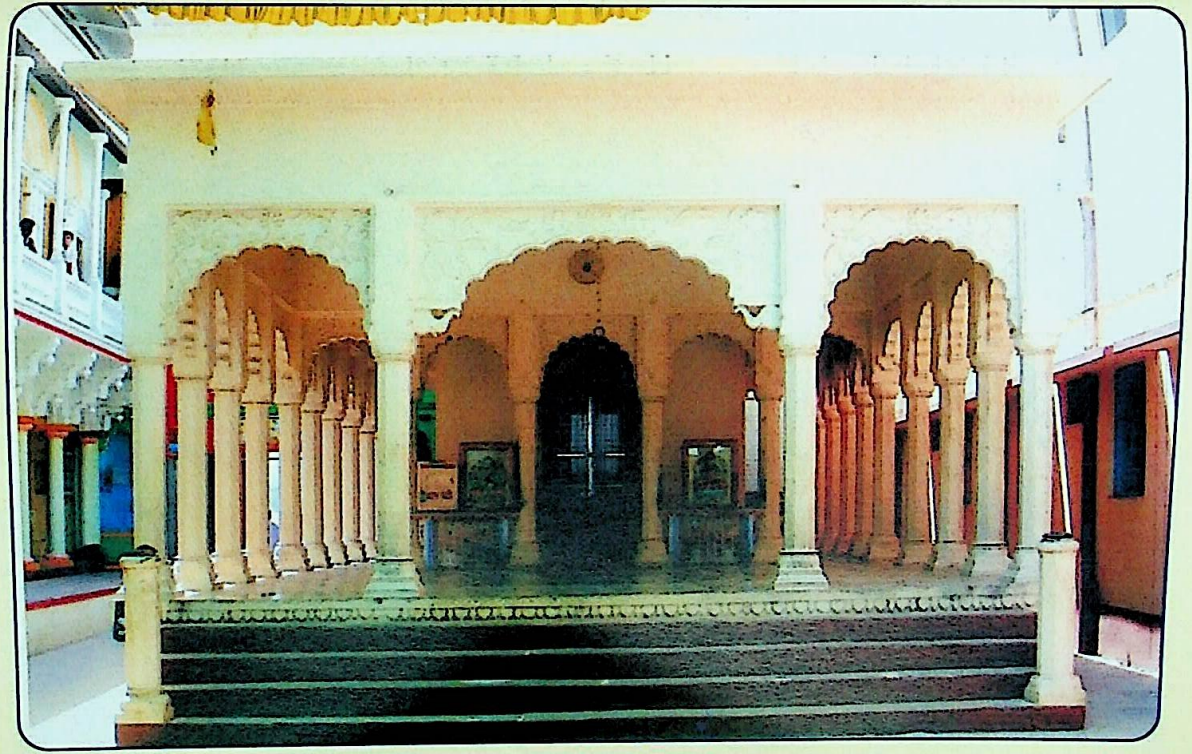

Shri Kashi Vishwanath temple of Jangamawadimath

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Jangampur School located at Banaras Hindu University Campus

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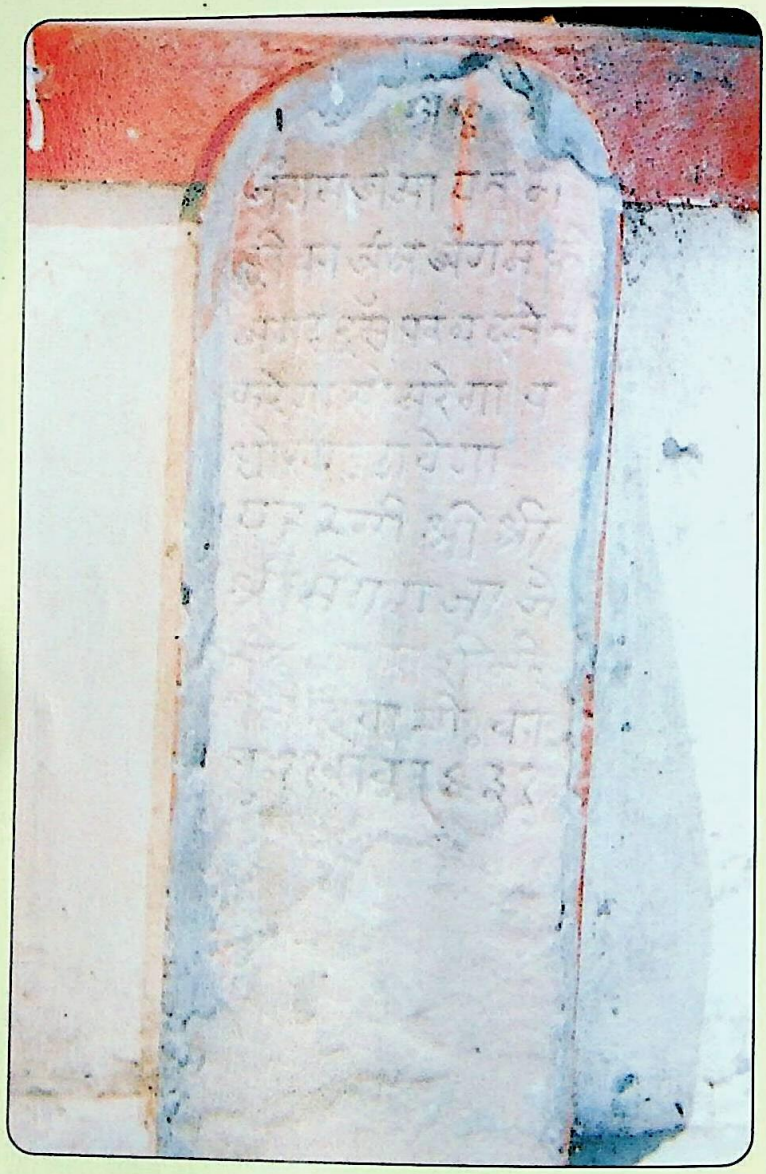

Inscription (1) Jangam Baba Temple, Hyderabad Colony, Banaras Hindu University

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A view of Jangampur Village with an old well

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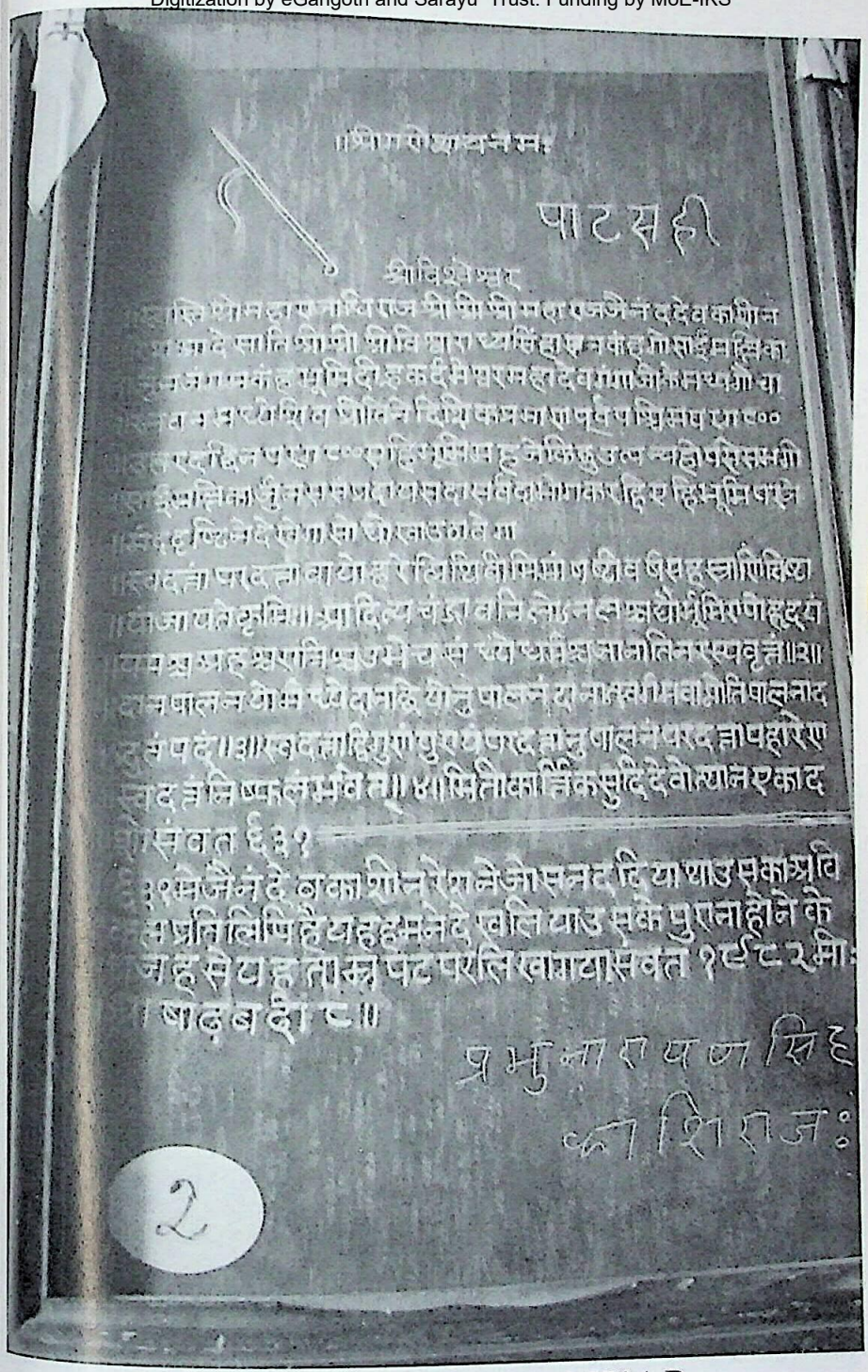

Jayanandadeva's Inscription of 574 A.D.
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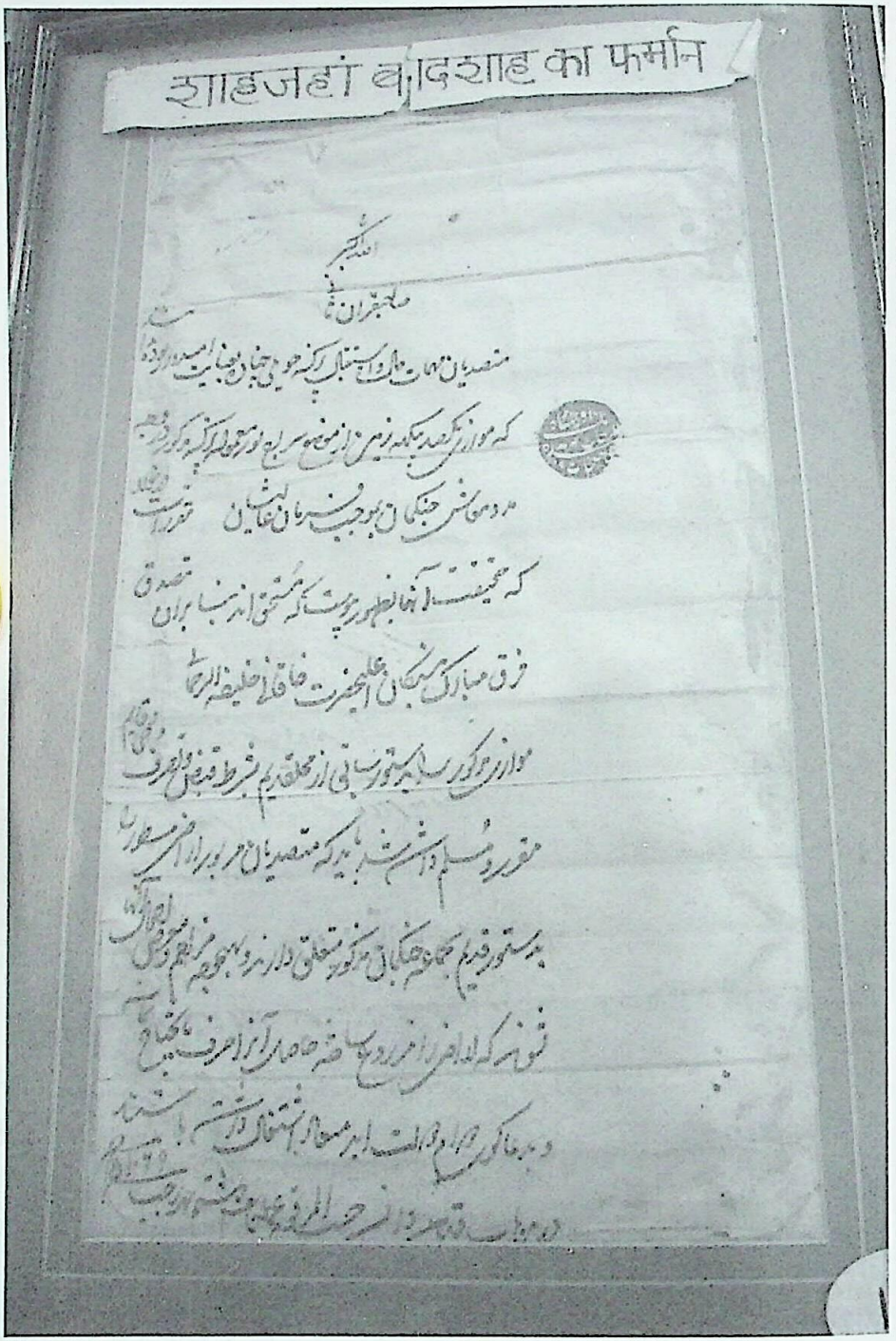
शाहजहां बादशाह का फर्मान



Shahjahan's Firman

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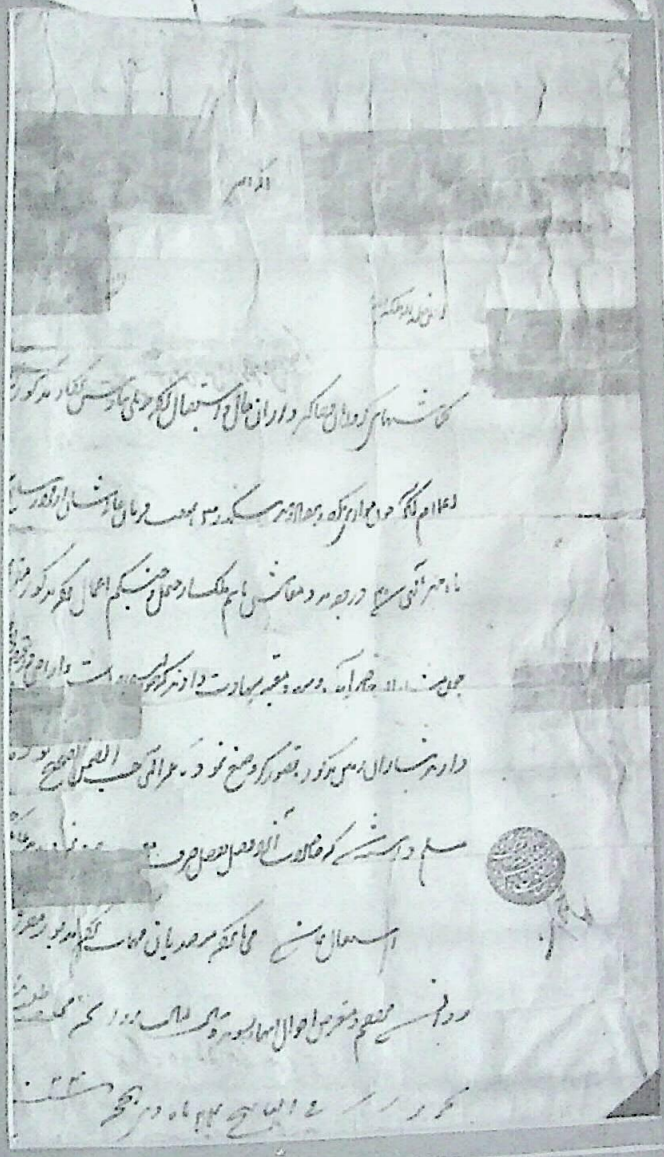

4

Jahangir Badshah's Firman

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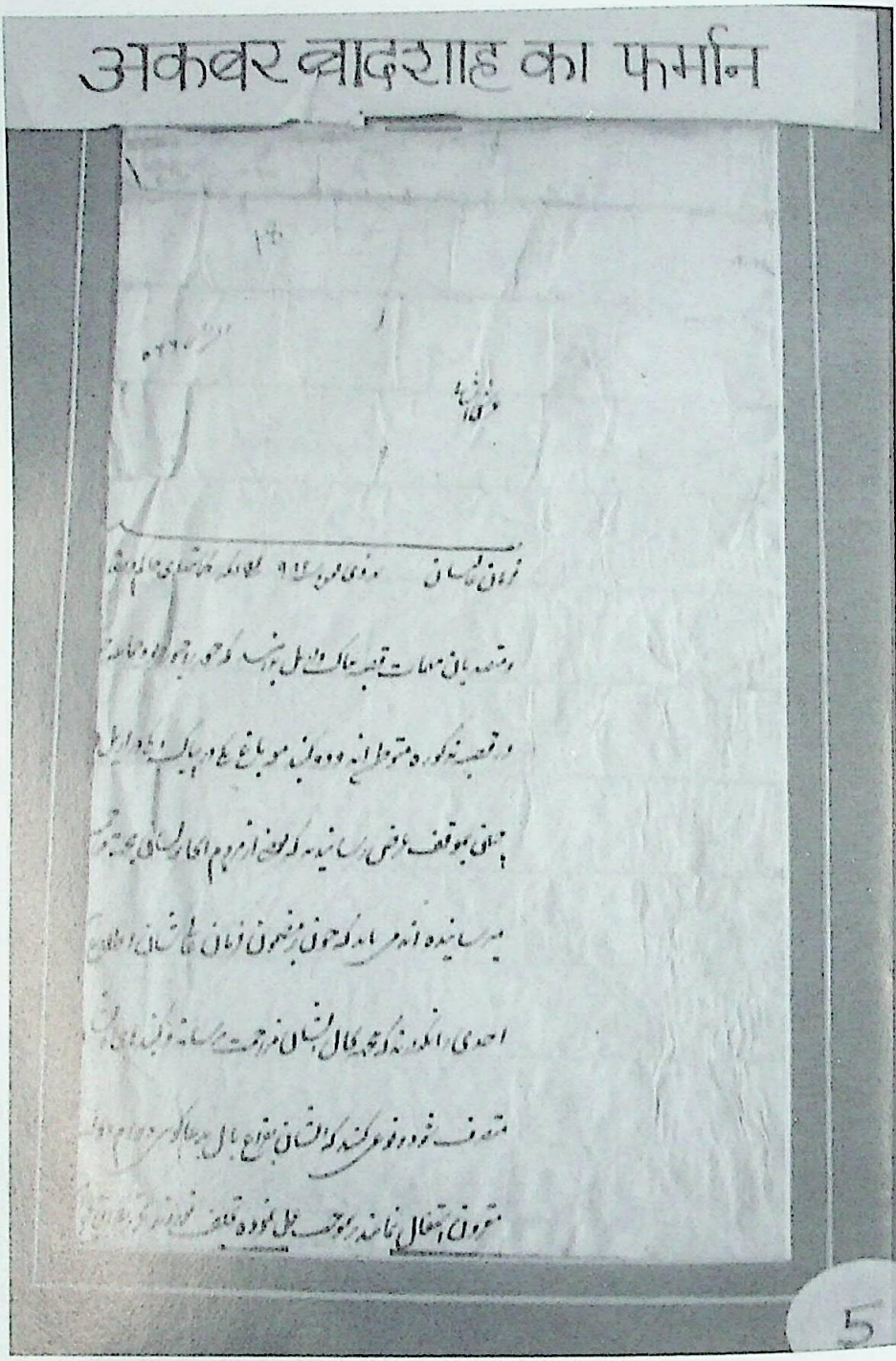
अकबर बादशाह का फर्मान



Akbar Badshaha's Firman

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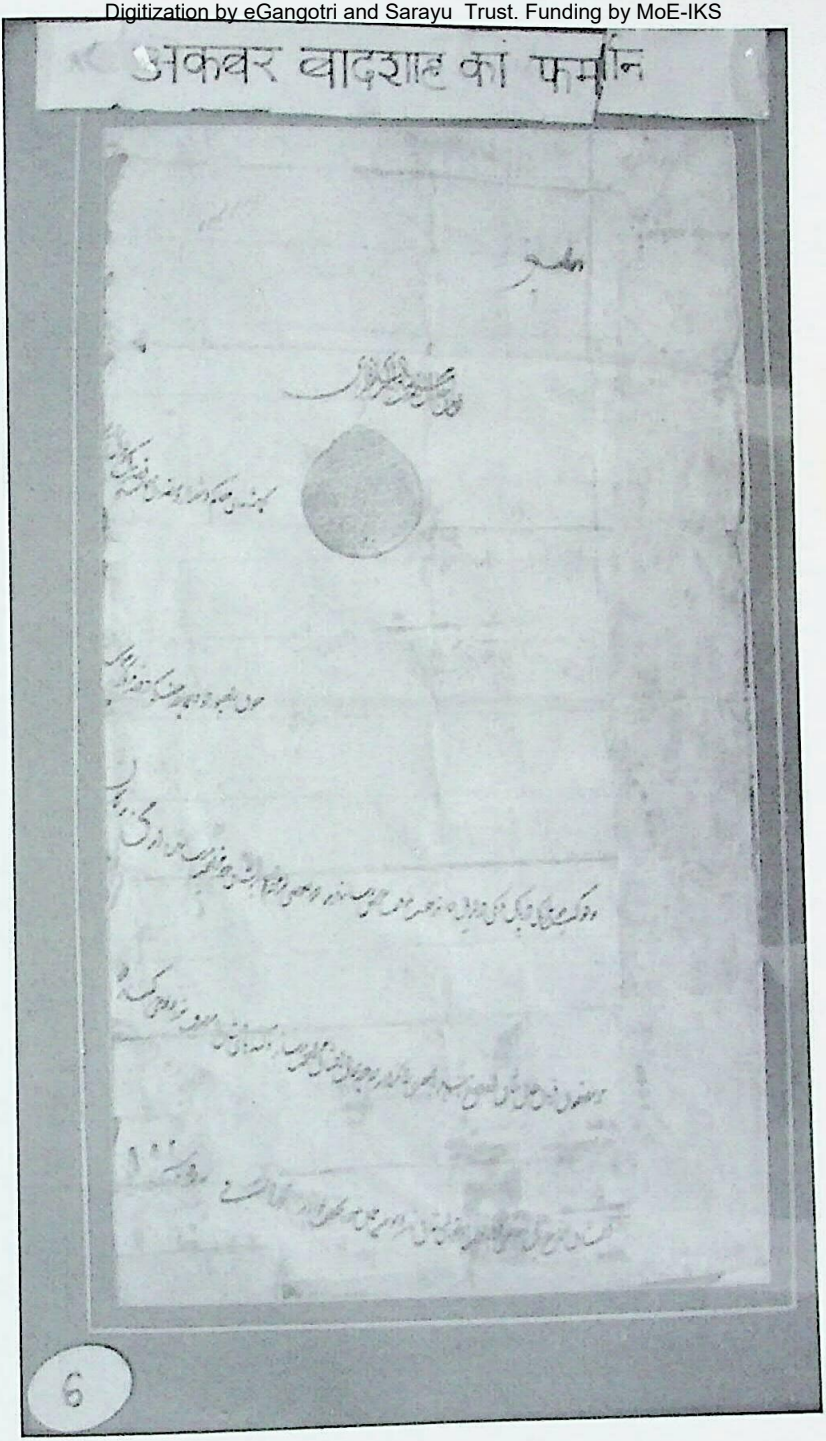

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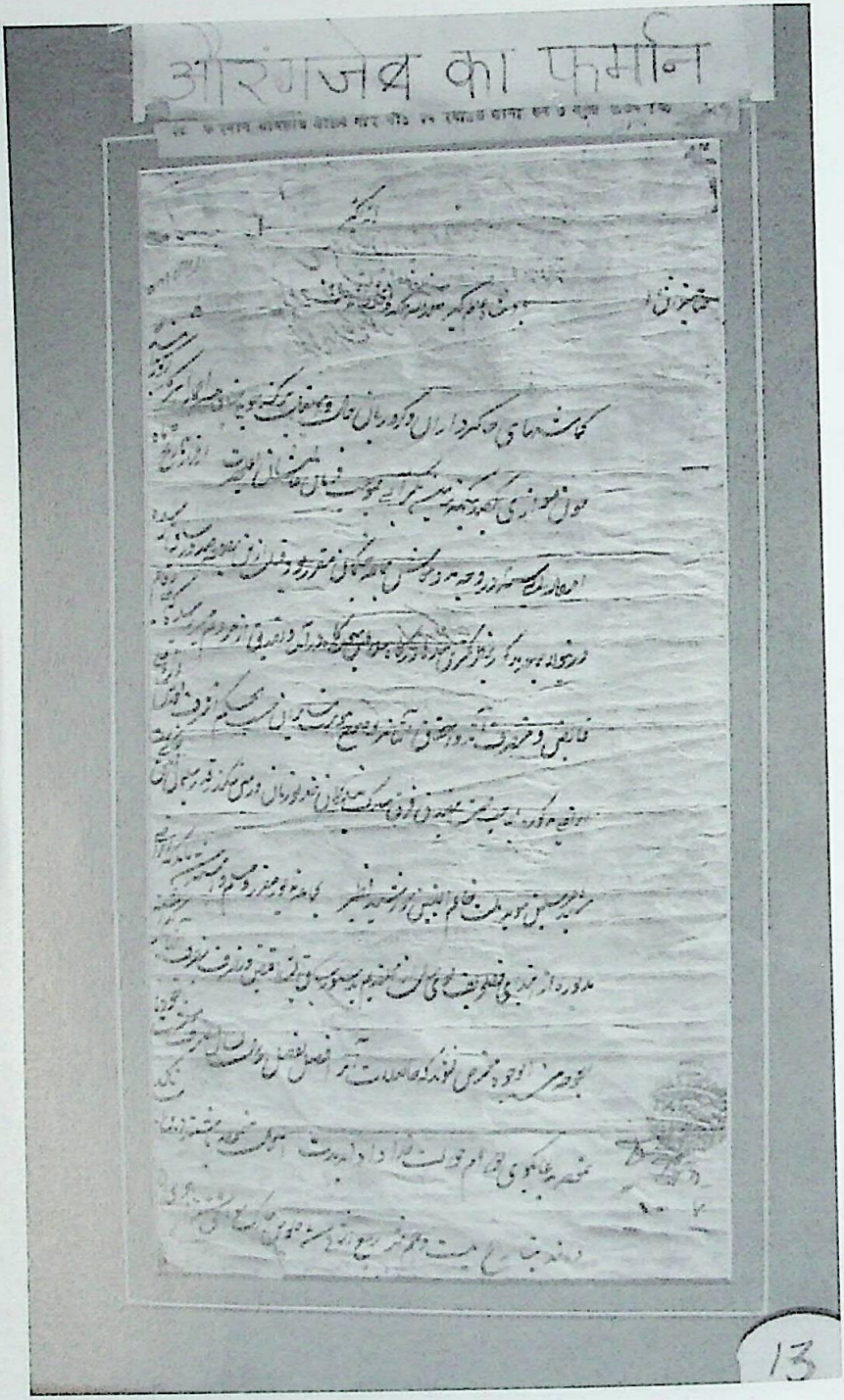

Aurangzeb's Firman

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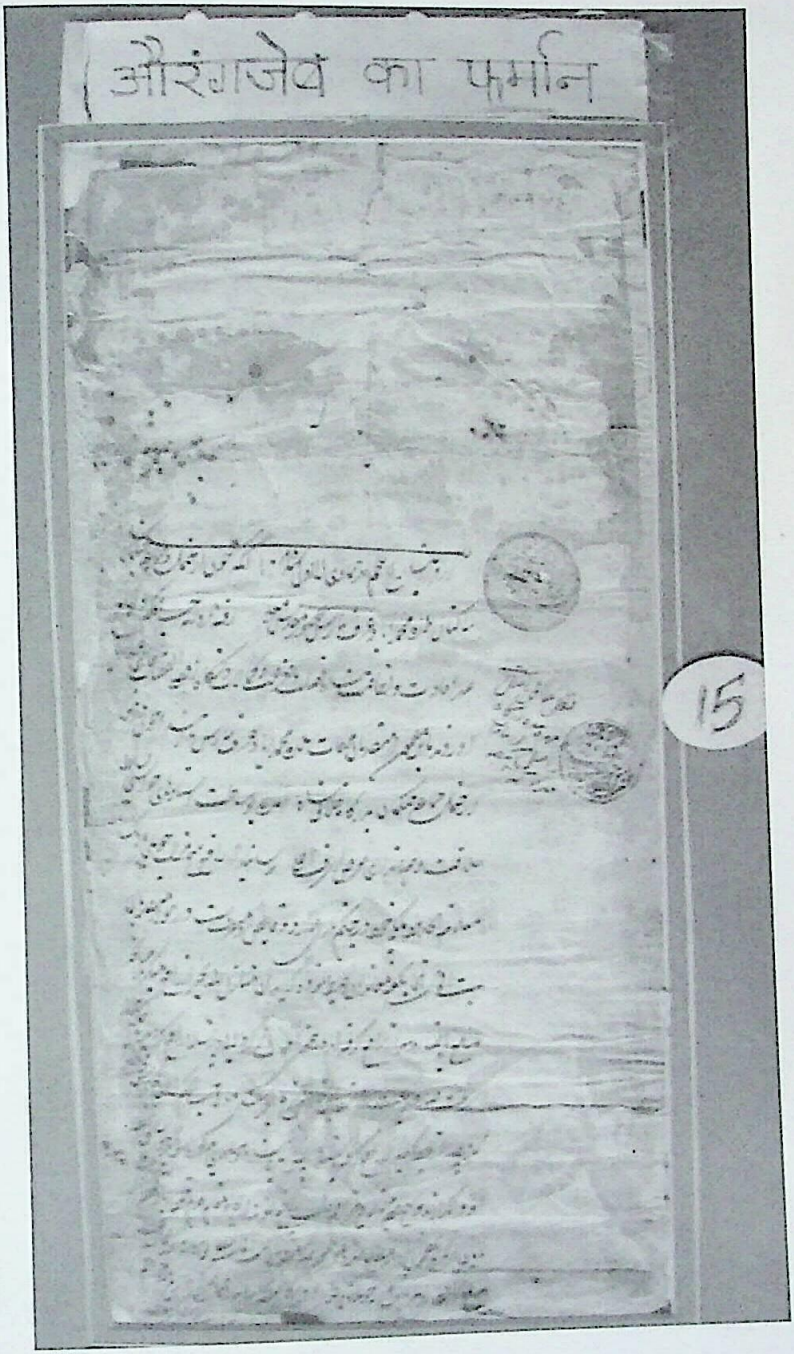

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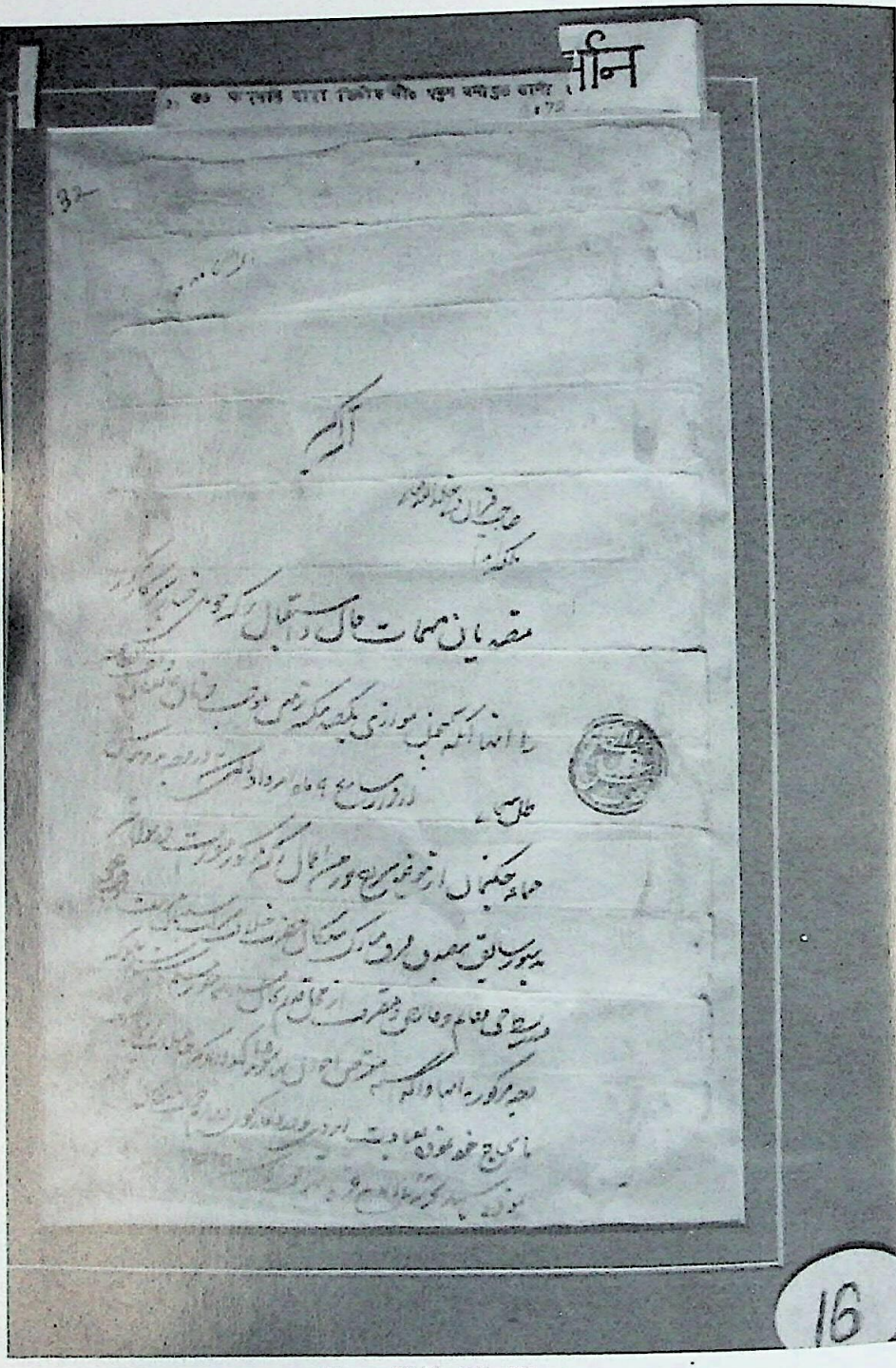

Dara Shikoh's Firman

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